

Forgotten Books

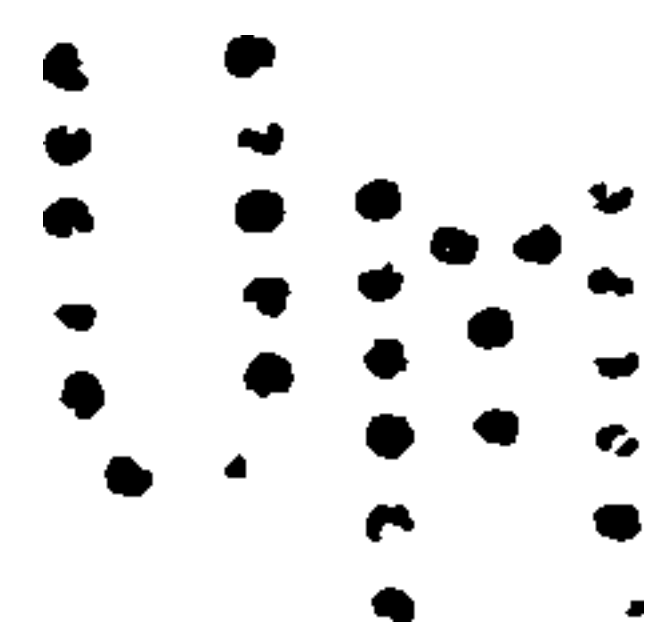
— www.forgottenbooks.com —

Copyright © 2016 FB &c Ltd.

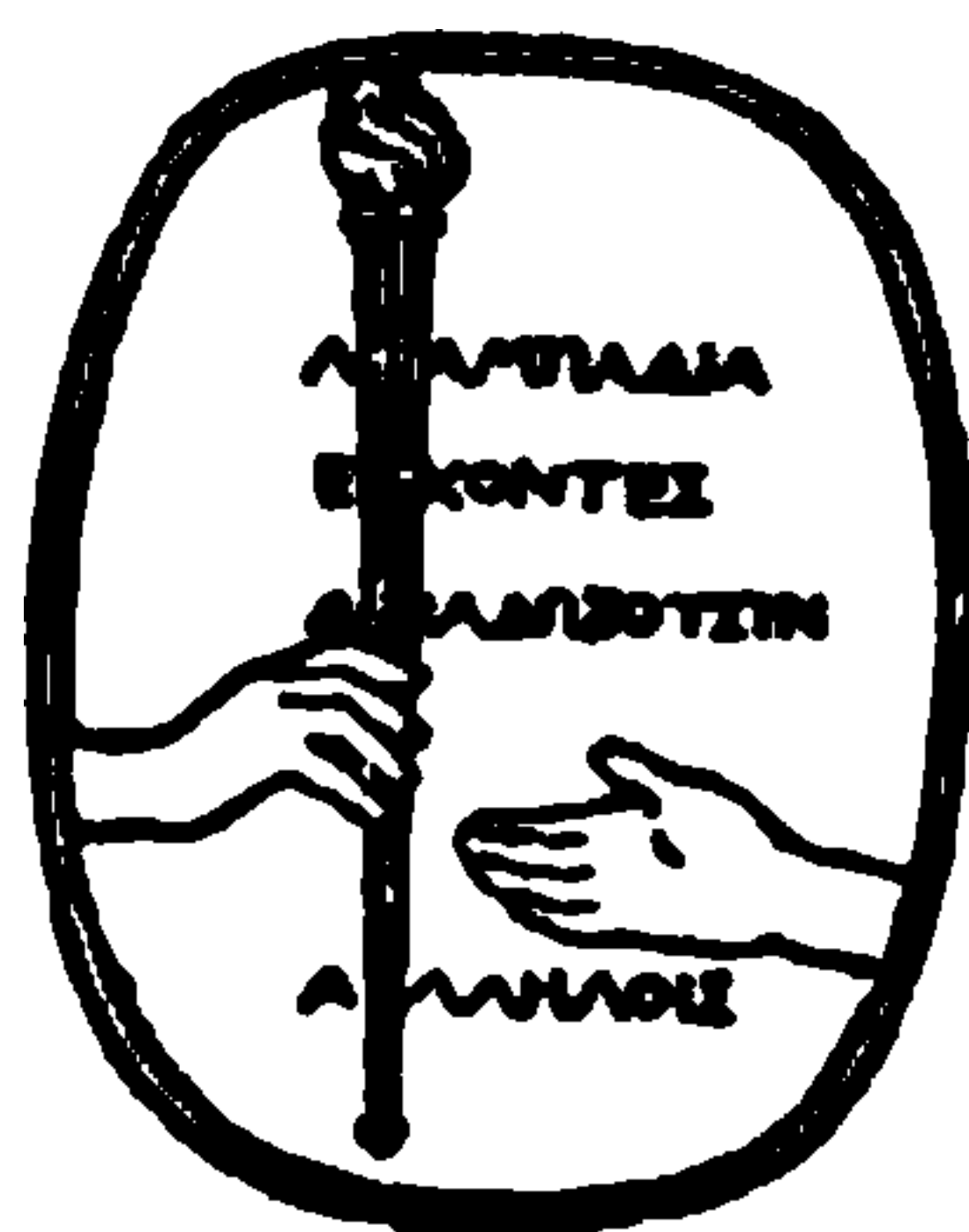
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL SALESMANSHIP



BY
H. J. BARRETT
AUTHOR OF
"DOLLARS AND SENSE"



HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK AND LONDON

Copyright, 1918, by Harper & Brothers
Printed in the United States of America
Published April, 1918

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
	PREFACE	vii
I.	TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM	1
	Reiteration in Salesmanship—Salesmanship: Some Pointers—How One Salesman Increased His Earnings—"Learn the Name of the Buyer"—Selling by Proxy—Selling to Professional Buyers—This Salesman Believes in the Psychological Effect of a Smoke—How to Handle a Prospect—Knocking Competitors—The Silence Cure—Selling Quality Goods—Prospects: Next Year's Customers—What Makes a Good Closer—Why Carry Samples?—"Keep Your Samples in Good Condition," says this Traveling Man—A Salesman Explodes the Rainy-day Fallacy—Sleuthing After Hours Provides this Man with Leads—How this Salesman Secured a Big Account—This Salesman Went Over the Head of the Purchasing Agent and Landed an Order—Selling by Questioning—Team-work in Selling—Slipping it Over—Handling a Recalcitrant Buyer—Points of Contact for the Salesman—A Young Lawyer Wins Out.	
II.	SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT	35
	A Salesman Who Didn't Grasp Human Nature—This Solicitor Found Old Man Hoskins' Vulnerable Spot—Strategy Sold \$70,000 Worth of Pictures for this Art Dealer—How a 25-cent Badge Increased Williams' Commissions \$25 Weekly—A Novel Approach Which Sold Books for this Man—"Aim High," says this Solicitor—The Sign on the Office Door—Selling Securities to Women—Closing Customers on the First Call—Canvassing Methods Sold this Gas Heater—Putting on the Screws Helps this Man's Sales—Capitalizing Human Vanity—This Salesman Demonstrated the Necessity for Using His Product—"Many Salesmen Talk Too Much," says this Successful One—How a 25-cent Investment Paid this Salesman an Annual Dividend of \$1,000—This Man's Over-	

CONTENTS

CHAP.

PAGE

head Expense Consists Only of the Price of His Hat—"A Little Tact is Worth a Lot of Aggressive Force," says this Salesman—Testimonials Help this Agent's Sales—Selling a House *vs.* Selling a Prospect—An Inexpensive Premium Doubles the Sales of 2,000 Agents—"Know Your Man," says this Life-insurance Solicitor—A Novel Argument Resulted in a \$100,000 Insurance Policy—A Friend at Court Helps this Insurance Man—The Salesman Who Never Guessed Wrong—A Side-show Employee Gave this Salesman an Idea—One Man's Secret in Selling Insurance.

III. SELLING THE RETAIL TRADE 76

Following Through a Sale—Capturing Dealers' Clerks—Selling in the Face of Cut-price Competition—Getting a Grip on Grocers—How a Knowledge of Human Nature Helped this Salesman—"Keeping Everlastingly At It," explains this Salesman's Success—"Show Me," said this Buyer;—and the Salesman Did—How a Slow Pay Was Converted into a Good Customer—The Secret of this Salesman's Success.

IV. SALES MANAGEMENT 89

The Point System in Selling—Picking Profitable Timber—The Defects of a Salesman's Qualities—Handling Salesmen Scientifically—How Salesmen Select Employers—Sales Manuals—Scientific Management Applied to a Canvassing Crew—Keeping Posted on Customers and Prospective Customers—Newspaper Clippings Often a Valuable Adjunct to the Sales Department—Initiative Develops a Novel Distributing System—Sales Management—How to Handle an Army of Nationally Distributed Salesmen—A Plan Which Prevented Salesmen from Selling Goods Which Could Not be Delivered—"Watch the Net as Well as the Gross," says this Sales Manager—A Plan Which Prevents the Control by Salesmen of Business Which Properly Belongs to the House—A Scientific Method of Judging Salesmen's Records—This Salesman Looks Ahead—Holding Customers—Suiting the Salesman to the Job—Selecting Salesmen—What a Sales Manager Should Know—A Failure-proof Method of Securing Successful Agents—A Hundred Door-bells a Day—This Man's Reputation as a Sales Manager is Due to His Methods Rather than to His Ability in Handling Men—Keeping a Grip on Customers—Why Some Salesmen Can Sell Only Certain Lines—Paying Salesmen What They're Worth—Daily Reports from Traveling Men—A Policy of Preparedness Contributes to the Stability of this Business—Putting Out-

CONTENTS

CHAP.

PAGE

side Salesmen on Their Mettle—Modern Practice in Sales Management—A Manual Which Created an All-star Aggregation of Salesmen—A Prize Offer to the Sales Force Elicits Many Practicable Ideas—"Don't Oversell a Customer," says this Sales Manager—Different Salesmen for Different Commodities—A Sales Campaign—Salaries or Commissions for Salesmen—Supplementing Salesmen's Efforts Through the Mail—A Simple Idea Which Increased this Concern's Business Fifty Per Cent.—Holding Customers in Line.

V. SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER 146

Retail Salesmanship as a Profession—Practical Salesmanship—The Technique of Inside Salesmanship—Selling by Intuition—Tact: the Salesman's Great Asset—Present-day Selling Ethics—The Psychology of Selling an Overcoat—Appealing to the Unexpressed Need—Why this Woman Is a Success at Selling—"Don't Oversell a Customer," says this Retailer—A Scientific System of Payment for Salespeople—The Salesman's Cynical Code—The Weakness of Straight Commissions—How Much Should a Clerk Sell?—Selling Retail Stock from Samples—This Woman Traces Her Start in Life to a Simple Suggestion—A Perpetual Incentive for Salesmen—Losing Sales without Losing Customers—Good Nature an Asset—The Positive *vs.* the Negative Attitude—Intensive Retail Selling.

VI. JUST SELLING 174

Finding Talking-points—Words, the Salesman's Tools—The Truth, the Whole Truth—Aggressive Salesmen—Selling on Saturday—How this Salesman Avoids Political Arguments—Salesmen and Super-salesmen—How to Sell—Clever Comparisons Help this Salesman—"The Great Factor in Selling Is the Human Factor"—Salesmanship: An Art or a Science?—A Double-barreled Method of Selling—Are Salesmen Born or Made?—For the Young Salesman—Serving an Apprenticeship in Selling—Handshaking—The Salesman of the Future—Optimism, a Requisite of Salesmanship—Getting a Start—Heart *vs.* Head Appeal—Memorize or Extemporize?—Breaking Away—A Salesman's Future—The Salesman Type—This Salesman's Explanation of His Success—A Salesman Must Be a Philosopher—Discretion, a Valuable Asset in Salesmanship—"Learn One New Thing about Business Every Day"—Securing the Interview.

PREFACE

To one who has never sold goods it seems odd that a man should be paid for engaging a certain number of his fellows in conversation each day. It seems an easy and agreeable method of earning a livelihood.

But any man who has covered a territory knows that selling is hard, exhausting work. Still, it has its compensations. A salesman is his own boss. And isn't it a satisfaction to pry a sizable order out of some tough prospect who opened the interview by remarking that he couldn't buy a brick in the Biltmore if the building were offered him for two dollars and a half?

Selling is a man-size job. Tact, quick thinking, tenacity, intuition, grit—these are some of the qualities that enter into the composition of the seasoned salesman. Experience, too, is a tremendous asset. Salesmanship, just as much as any profession, must be learned. And every salesman who has watched his own progress knows how big a part was played by the hard knocks of the actual daily grind.

Because something, too, can be gained from the other man's experience, the writer believes that this volume will prove of value to salesmen. Salesmanship cannot be learned from a book, but many a valuable pointer can be thus acquired. Unknown to themselves, scores of salesmen can claim authorship of *How to Sell More Goods*. For it is written largely out of the experience of the many salesmen the writer has met in the course of his own work,

P R E F A C E

Originally published in the New York *Evening World* and other newspapers, the articles are reprinted at the request of their readers. Most of the volume applies directly to the daily problems of the salesman. Two chapters, however, are devoted, respectively, to "Sales Management" and "Selling Behind the Counter."

It is the writer's hope that they will serve to smooth the tortuous path extending from the "approach" to the dotted line in the case of the salesman now reading these words.

H. J. B.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

I

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

Reiteration in Salesmanship

“WHEN I was a young salesman,” said a veteran, “I used to think that salesmanship consisted in telling your story and abiding by the result. If your exposition and argument didn’t convince the prospect, then, plainly, he was hopeless, and the proper policy was to pass on to the next. But it wasn’t long before I learned that there was more to salesmanship than the mere appeal to cool reason.

“In advertising they say that repetition is reputation. Well, repetition is just as valuable in selling by the spoken as in selling by the written word. The cumulative effect of reiteration is incalculable. In selling a man to-day, my plan is to first deliver a complete canvass. In doing this, I watch closely to see to what arguments he seems most responsive, or, rather, least unresponsive. Then I start all over again, taking pains to reiterate those points. Over and over again I couch the same arguments in different phraseology. And each time they drive a little deeper into his consciousness.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

Each time they weaken his resolve to hold on to his money. Each time they weaken his will power as applied to that particular decision. That is why it is very seldom that one makes a really worthwhile sale in less than an hour's interview. And often two or three hours are required.

"After sufficient reiteration, you can feel that defensive wall beginning to give way. Then is the time to bring up your reserves in the form of tried and tested closing tactics with which to complete the breach. Don't wait too long, for prospects have an uncomfortable habit of abruptly closing the interview when they feel themselves giving way. And sometimes they seem to gain a fresh access of resisting power from some unseen source.

"Experience develops a sixth sense in the salesman, a sort of psychological insight, an uncanny keenness of perception which tells him when to flash the order-blank and proffer the fountain-pen. Then strike and strike hard. That is the moment at which you reap the benefit of the previous reiteration."

Salesmanship: Some Pointers

In the days of the cavemen life very plainly was one continuous battle. The men with the thickest pates and the heaviest clubs survived; the weaker soon found themselves relegated to the scrap-heap.

To-day, under our competitive system, the struggle for existence is just as ruthless and savage for most of us, but the qualifications for survival are different.

It has always seemed to me that, barring the case of pugilists, the life of the outside salesman more nearly approached the conditions prevailing in primitive times than that of the followers of any other present-day pursuit.

Without the qualities of virility and tenacity, both pos-

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

sessed in superabundance, no man will succeed in salesmanship. And the more difficult the sales problem presented, the greater the need for these qualities. Very seldom does one find an able salesman over forty-five years of age. It is a young man's profession.

A salesman's life is one constant battle with obdurate prospects. "Stand and deliver," says the Knight of the Grip. "Not on your life," replies the victim, and the battle is on.

As on the battle-field, strategy is valuable in the encounter. A general never exposes the full power of his support until forced to; he never assumes a weakness in an enemy's line until assured of it. Similarly, a salesman should avoid the danger of over-assumption.

For example, Cushing, a graduate of a certain school of salesmanship, recently entered the office of the buyer for a New York wholesale grocer. Cushing was handling a certain newly launched preserve.

After introducing himself, he took a chair, laid a glass jar containing his product on the buyer's desk slide, removed the top, placed his opened order-book and pencil beside the jar (this for its suggestive force), and prepared to open the engagement.

"Now, Mr. Green," he urged, "I ask you to taste that splendid preserve."

"Not bad," admitted Green, non-committally.

"I ask you as man to man," continued Cushing, "wouldn't that make a delicious titbit for afternoon tea at Mrs. Green's?" (More suggestion here.)

"Frankly, it wouldn't, Mr. Cushing," was the response, "as Mrs. Green has subsisted entirely upon angel-cake for the past seven years. She passed on in 1908," and Green stroked his exuberant growth of let-us-pray whiskers in tender reverie.

Conceive the effect of this bolt from the blue on Cushing's

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

canvass. It was a body blow. For a few moments he stumbled on in confusion and finally gave up in despair, and departed. Green, as a matter of fact, was an unmitigated bachelor, but Cushing had left an opening and suffered the deserved consequences.

Another case: A cutlery salesman was soliciting the business of a big wholesale hardware house. It was his first visit.

"Why, Mr. Everett," he remarked, fervently, "carry our line and you'll double your sales. I know a house in Chicago, the Blank Company, which is doing twice the amount of business you are in this branch."

"That's strange," was the dry response. "We supply them with everything they handle in cutlery."

The salesman thereupon promptly took the count.

If the psychological secret of successful selling were readily ascertainable, we'd all be earning \$20,000 a year. Most salesmen of the first rank are hopeless subjects for the interviewer. They can throw little light on the mental processes involved.

But one point is well established. They are utterly lacking in self-consciousness. Only two factors enter into their problem—the goods and the prospect. The infusion of the third factor, self, is what spoils many an otherwise good salesman.

Many salesmen can sell one line and fail miserably in handling another which intrinsically is far easier to handle. For instance, the writer is acquainted with a man who averages two sales a day of Long Island lots located on the inaccessible fastnesses of some remote dune. The price is \$100 a lot. Armed only with a map and his consummate nerve, he bowls over his victims regularly. But shifting once, for the sake of variety, to magazine-subscription work, he scored a flat and utter failure. There is but one

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

answer to this puzzle—the man's own mental attitude. He believes he can sell the real estate; he is afraid of the magazine proposition.

To what extent selling is the result of the deliberate influence of one man's will upon another's—in other words, to what degree it savors of hypnotism—is a moot point. One thing is certain: every successful salesman seeks to meet and hold the prospect's eye throughout the interview. And almost every salesman of the first rank is conscious of the exertion of some psychic force in the delivery of his canvass. Hence the need of superabundant vitality.

The most phenomenal solicitor ever put in the field by a certain weekly of national fame admitted that his efforts were purely hypnotic. He worked only two hours a day, the strain upon his vitality precluding the possibility of longer hours. He claimed that, once he got his eye, he never missed a victim, except in cases of an interruption to break the subtle spell. Finally, this man's nervous system collapsed under the strain; he became a drunkard and is now heard of no more. But his amazing records are still discussed among the ranks of magazine solicitors.

How One Salesman Increased His Earnings

"It is fatally easy for a salesman to invent excuses for not working," said a seasoned veteran, recently. "'It's no use to try to sell anything Monday morning,' he reflects, 'nor on Saturday, nor on a rainy day, nor when in a listless mood, nor when the customer's mind is distracted by thoughts of war, nor late in the afternoon when his mind is on catching his train, nor early in the morning when he's going through his mail, nor on Friday, because that's my unlucky day,' and so on *ad infinitum*. 'To work under these untoward auspices results merely in spoiling prospects,' he

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

concludes, and, as a consequence, the average outside salesman is about 30 per cent. efficient.

“Now all these obstacles are pure figments of the imagination. I know it because I’ve proved it. They have as little basis in fact as the bogies of childhood. Because he lacks the will power to overcome that inertia which we all must combat, the salesman invents them as a justification of his attitude. Soon he succeeds in kidding himself into believing in their reality.

“I don’t blame him. I’ve done it myself. It’s due to several causes. One is that the salesman lacks direct supervision. Another is that a vast proportion of the salesman’s effort is wasted under any circumstances. In many lines not more than one out of a hundred calls results in a sale. Nevertheless, everything else being equal, the salesman who covers the most prospects will make the most sales.

“How did I overcome this tendency to lie down on the job? First, I tried setting myself a task—I would make forty calls a day. This proved impracticable, because in the event of a lengthy interview my schedule was thrown askew. Then I tried the idea of working steadily so many hours, rain or shine, Saturday or Monday. I started promptly at nine and quit at twelve; began again at one and knocked off at five-thirty. But gradually I began to backslide. After a few weeks I was as bad as ever. Finally I discussed my problem with a fellow-salesman. He, too, was trying to hold himself to a schedule. We concluded to bet each other twenty-five dollars that we would not break our schedules; this to be a weekly penalty. That was four years ago. Not once has either of us been obliged to pay. This bet has acted as a permanent and automatic spur to sustain us in our efforts. Within two months of inventing this incentive our commissions had increased over 40 per cent. Now the

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

habit of working by schedule is so firmly implanted that we do it without effort."

"Learn the Name of the Buyer"

"Even to-day there are many concerns in which the prevailing attitude seems to be that a man with something to sell is a dangerous fellow, an enemy who must be repelled at every point," remarked a salesman, recently. "In places of this sort the most futile and annoying obstacles are placed in the salesman's path, ranging from the office-boy's demand for the nature of one's errand to actual falsehoods regarding the boss's whereabouts from his secretary. And, as a rule, these concerns continue to exist merely because of the efforts of their own salesmen! Think of it! Without salesmen, the entire business structure of the nation would collapse in ruins. And yet salesmen are often treated as though they were violent anarchists with bombs concealed about their persons.

"I have found, however, that, in securing an interview, knowledge of the name of the man you seek is a great aid. It is amusing to note how often this acts as a sort of magic password. To say, 'I wish to see the purchasing agent,' or, 'I wish to see the manager,' stamps one as a suspicious character to be kept under surveillance, while the confident announcement, 'I wish to see Mr. Jones,' seems to act as a shibboleth, this despite the fact that Mr. Jones's name may be printed on his office door right in front of you.

"One-tenth of this exclusion of salesmen is due to a legitimate desire to conserve the executive's time; nine-tenths of it arises from the cheap vanity of the average man who has attained a position of sufficient consequence to render it worth a salesman's time to call upon him.

2 "I've experienced so much difficulty from this question

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

that now before I enter an establishment I always take pains to learn the name of the proper person to see. To gain this information over the telephone is absurdly easy. People will divulge facts over the 'phone which they'll stubbornly and stupidly withhold if questioned direct. A few moments' preliminary preparation yields knowledge which will at least insure one an interview. That much accomplished, the rest is strictly up to the salesman."

Selling by Proxy

"There is a situation which occasionally confronts every salesman," said one, recently. "He will succeed in convincing a subordinate in a concern of the merit of his proposition, and the latter will say:

"It looks good to me and I'll take it up with the boss. Call in a day or two and get your final answer."

"The young salesman always feels as though the deal were closed. 'What could augur better than a boost from the inside,' he reflects, 'from a man who is close to the boss and who obviously has no ax to grind?'

"Nine times out of ten he returns to meet a flat refusal. Why is this? Was he double-crossed? Did his friend at court throw him? No. Here was the difficulty:

"His case was presented by a man who was not adequately equipped. The salesman forgot that it required some weeks for him to perfect his own canvass, and he expected his ally to fight his battle as well as he himself could. Further than this, the salesman's spokesman lacked the direct, personal interest which would have actuated the former. He lacked both the preparation and the attitude necessary to convince the boss.

"Harsh experience has shown me the futility of trying to sell by proxy. Never let any one represent your interests

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

in such a matter. Get to the main noise yourself. Beard the lion in his den and fight it out. Then, if you lose, you'll at least have the satisfaction of knowing that the case didn't go by default. Selling by proxy very seldom works. Miles Standish couldn't put it over, and I've never seen any one who could."

Selling to Professional Buyers

"Too many salesmen assume that similar tactics will prove efficacious with entirely different people," remarked a particularly successful traveling man. "Plainly this is a mistake.

"Although it is true that almost all buyers can be classified as belonging to some one of several types, nevertheless, the individual variations are endless. You can't sell a professional buyer, for example, by using methods which would, perhaps, secure results with the general public.

"Every salesman who has ever sold anything by straight office-to-office or man-to-man canvassing knows that in many instances sheer force of personality gained the desired signature. The number of people who will buy things they don't want merely because they are argued and bulldozed into it is amazing. This is why the quality of persistence is so valuable to a salesman. Lacking the will power to say 'No' and to abruptly close the interview, the prospect will advance objection after objection, feebly temporizing in an effort to avoid signing the fatal blank.

"The records of any concern which sells upon the installment plan supply sufficient evidence of the innumerable sales which are made under pressure. To the uninitiated the number of lapses is surprising. The man who has not at some time in his life bought something which he didn't want, couldn't afford, and later regretted buying is rare indeed. Almost every one is caught now and then in a weak

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

moment by a strong-arm salesman who succeeds in bludgeoning an order from him.

"I received my sales training in the strong-arm school. I had perfected a canvass which gradually increased in intensity until, at the climax, I was exerting every ounce of force and will power I possessed. I made good with books, correspondence-school courses, magazine subscriptions, etc.

"Later I shifted to selling merchandise. In this field I dealt only with case-hardened, professional buyers. Did my strong-arm methods work? They did not. My prospects bought if, after careful analysis and comparison, they considered it a good investment. Otherwise they listened to my perfervid efforts with amused tolerance.

"To watch me in action to-day, one would think it made little difference to me whether or not the customer bought. My attitude is this: 'Here's a good thing; its strong points are as follows: . . . I knew, of course, that you'd want to profit by it, so I brought it around to show to you.'

"This is, in general, my attitude, casual to the last degree. In individual instances, my canvass is colored by my relations with the purchaser, but with none of these men do I spring any 'sign now!—now when the opportunity offers!' line of talk. With my clientele it simply won't work. My very indifference seems to stimulate the buyer's interest. But with other publics other measures are required."

This Salesman Believes in the Psychological Effect of a Smoke

"I always like to get a prospective customer to smoking," said a successful salesman who is famed for his tact, "for it's a great lubricant to any transaction. It puts the buyer into a mellow frame of mind in which he feels disposed to

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

do business without wrangling over petty details. But I'm mighty careful as to how I proffer a smoke.

"Many salesmen defeat their object by shoving a cigar into a customer's hands with a brusque, 'Have a smoke,' much as though it were a bribe. And really, if you believe in bribes, you can't very well bank upon a fifteen-cent one. Often I've seen a customer's back rise at this method of approach.

"Generally I'm well into the interview before suggesting a smoke, and then I do it very delicately. As a rule, I start to light a cigar, and then, as though it had just occurred to me, offer the customer one with the request that he join me. And this ordinarily occurs during the second interview, not the first. The fact of the matter is that nothing is further from my thoughts than to use a cigar as a bribe. It is merely for the sake of their psychological effect that I use them at all, and they have helped a great deal in smoothing over the rough spots of a transaction. Although I would hesitate to claim that I could trace sales directly to this feature, it has helped greatly in the way of obtaining lenient terms in regard to convenient shipping arrangements, etc."

How to Handle a Prospect

"In demonstrating our product," says a manual on salesmanship issued by a firm which has scored a conspicuous success, "if the prospect shows a desire to ask questions or raise objections, let him do so, and answer the objections or questions before going to something else. Don't make the fatal mistake of saying, 'We are coming to that later,' thus giving the prospect the impression that you are concealing something.

"Nothing will start opposition or antagonism more quickly than a seeming disregard for his opinions and objections.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

Convince your prospect on each point before leaving it. Remember, it is not what you say that sells him; it is what he believes."

Sound advice this, which applies to practically any proposition or product ever offered for sale.

Knocking Competitors

"One of the easiest things in the world for a theorist to say is that a salesman should not knock a competitor's product," remarked a traveling man. "Only recently I heard some highbrow speaker explain how such a policy inevitably reacted to the damage of the knocker—how one should ignore competitors—how the proper plan was to so concentrate the customer's attention upon his own product that a competitor's was forgotten, and so on.

"But what are you going to do when a customer demands a comparison? What are you going to do when he says: 'The Blank Company offers me the same thing at 20 per cent. less. Why should I deal with you?'

"There is, of course, but one thing to do. Get right down to brass tacks and demonstrate by tests that yours is a superior product.

"From my experience, I have concluded that there is enough in this 'don't knock' idea to justify its promulgation. Unquestionably, there is too much criticism of competitors. And undoubtedly the salesman who always has his hammer out hurts his own house and helps his competitor's. But, like everything else, circumstances alter cases. Often one has to criticize. Often there is no choice between standing to your guns and firing some hot shot into the enemy and surrendering.

"In such a case, there is but one thing to do—clearly and

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

convincingly explain that yours is the better product. If this involves exposure of a competitor's weakness, so much the worse for the competitor.

"If you're selling an all-wool article, detach a shred of the fiber and make the dealer taste the oil in it. If he produces a competitor's fabric which is claimed to be all wool and which the price indicates is not that, expose it by the tests known to every student of textiles.

"You don't have to exhibit any personal animosity. You don't have to call your competitor a blackleg, cheat, and scoundrel. An air of calm tolerance will endow your assertions with much more weight. It is perfectly possible to be on the friendliest terms with competitors and yet not submit to misrepresentations regarding the comparative values of your offerings. It isn't so much what you say, but the manner and spirit in which you say it, that counts. To knock in an ill-tempered, contemptuous spirit cannot fail to harm the knocker. But to calmly and impartially demonstrate the truth in the case of opposing claims will do you no damage."

The Silence Cure

"Here's a situation which occasionally confronts me," remarked a young salesman, "and I don't know how to meet it. I'll succeed in securing an audience, somewhat against the will of the prospect, perhaps, and he, to evince his resentment, will sit at his desk, reading letters or the newspaper, leaving me in the position of talking to a dummy. What does your experience suggest?" he concluded, addressing the sales manager.

"That is a problem which must often be faced," was the reply. "One's natural impulse is, of course, to pursue a policy of frightfulness—to wreck the premises and shoot

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

the proprietor. But no man who can't control his natural impulse will ever become a star salesman.

"When I was a novice at the game I used to keep on talking, calmly ignoring the prospect's boorishness. But I found that this plan seldom resulted successfully. A man so mannerless as to treat a salesman in that fashion is not amenable to such tactics.

"A better plan is to cease talking and wait for attention. There is a certain dignity about silence which is lacking in talking to a wooden Indian. I found that silence almost always wins. Just sit there, calmly, impassively, unresentfully; but with an air as though you meant to sit there until the crack of doom if need be. This policy is thoroughly disconcerting. Never fear but that the man is actually conscious of your presence. He is more uncomfortable than you are. And because he has a sneaking suspicion that he is in the wrong he is anxious to end the suspense and close the interview. Nine times out of ten he concludes that the easiest way out of the difficulty is to hear your story and turn you down. Well, all you're after is a hearing. Silence will give it to you.

"In the tenth case, he will fly into a rage and begin to become insulting. Then, of course, you're master of the situation. To adopt a soothing attitude, refusing to take him seriously, puts him in a position which generally means an order. A man in a rage talking to a man who is calm and collected is at such a disadvantage that he is practically lost. Calm him down with a sympathetic, fatherly air, and his inevitable reaction is a panicky condition of utter demoralization during which you can sign him up for almost any amount. The scriptural injunction of heaping coals of fire on your enemy's head is one of the salesman's safest guides. A man whose rage has evaporated because he found nothing to fan it into a flame is one of the easiest prospects

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

one could ask for. Try the silence cure on the next boor you meet. You'll find that it is a deadly attack."

Selling Quality Goods

"It has been well said that a salesman sells, not goods, but rather his ideas about goods," said a veteran.

"And so true is this that I am convinced no man can successfully sell anything in which he doesn't believe. That is why I have often turned down offers to sell inferior products which looked good but which possessed no solid merit. It was not that there was any ethical issue involved. It was merely that I feared the effect upon my own sales ability. As a rule, you'll find that articles which sell upon a quality basis rather than upon a price appeal are represented by abler salesmen.

"There is a reason for this. Able, conscientious workmanship inspires support and admiration. This is reflected in the salesman's canvass. The cheap, imitation article lacks that element. As a result, even though a competent man takes it out to sell, he cannot put it over with the same ginger. His 'ideas about the goods' are not of a sort to awaken his enthusiasm.

"Still further, the customer himself is unconsciously affected by a quality product. A man may sincerely believe that he's in business merely for the money there is in it, but at the same time he does take a certain artist's pride in handling a worthy product. That is why the profit argument is not the only one which carries weight with a retailer.

"Then, too, there is so much more to be said in favor of goods of quality than for those manufactured with nothing but the price element in view. They permit of a more interesting, more convincing canvass.

"My advice to the young salesman is to carry as good a

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

line, within reasonable limits, as he can secure. In the long run, it will pay better. For the goods themselves will tend to develop his eloquence and actual sales ability, and it's these qualities by which, in the final analysis, he must score a permanent success in his chosen field."

Prospects: Next Year's Customers

"I used to try to carry names of prospects in my head," remarked a salesman. "And it wasn't until I had seen many of those which had slipped my mind develop into prosperous accounts for some competitor that I concluded that it paid to write them down in my note-book, with a definite date upon which I was to see them.

"Now, whenever the name of a live prospect reaches me, down it goes in black and white. And every Saturday I go over my note-book and transfer to some future date the names of those who, from press of business, I had been unable to reach during the week.

"This systematic handling of prospects results in more than one benefit. In the first place, it means new customers and, hence, more business. But, in addition to this, it increases my own efficiency. Just as the scientific-management experts have learned that office help will work at highest speed only under the pressure of a pile of unfinished tasks, so the salesman tends to relax his efforts unless he has a prospect list constantly spurring him on.

"Every time I consult my note-book and study that list of names I begin to walk more quickly, talk more quickly, and actually think more quickly.

"Keep plenty of prospects ahead is my advice to the salesman who wants to push himself up into the one-hundred-dollar-a-week class. And don't try to carry them in your

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

skull. Put them down in your note-book and then you'll be sure to get to them."

What Makes a Good Closer

"It was when I was a very young man that I grasped one secret of salesmanship," remarked a veteran. "One day, when making some suburban points, I found myself at noon in a little local trade center which lacked a restaurant. A pushcart man was passing. I flagged him and asked him the price of three bananas. Without replying, he selected three, put them in a paper bag, and proffered them, saying: 'Tenna centa.' You see, by assuming that I would purchase, he exerted a sort of moral pressure which helped to close the deal.

"That ought to apply to bigger things," I reflected. "That take-it-for-granted attitude is a good closer if it is used with discrimination."

"From that time on I began to apply the principle. In selling merchandise, after displaying my goods and delivering my canvass, instead of inquiring whether or not the man desired to purchase, I inquired as to how much he wanted to purchase. Later I improved on this, in some instances, by naming the amount it seemed to me he required. I found that it acted as a potent closer.

"This idea can be applied in a variety of ways. For instance, in seeking to secure an appointment with a man, I don't say, 'When can I see you?' but rather, 'Shall it be morning or afternoon—and will to-morrow suit you?'

"When I sold insurance, I never wound up with, 'Now don't you want to protect your family, Mr. Jones?' but with, 'Now you'll want at least \$10,000 worth, Mr. Jones,' and so on.

"Naturally, discernment is required in the exercise of this little device. Some people resent even a hint of coercion,

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

but the majority will submit if the pressure is applied with sufficient tact. It's a grasp of this principle which makes a salesman a good closer."

Why Carry Samples?

"Look at that chap laden with a fifty-pound sample case," remarked the sales manager, as he passed the purchasing agent's office. "Isn't that a man-killer? I'll wager that case cuts that salesman's efficiency 30 per cent. And the chances are that it's utterly unnecessary. Had I myself not been a salesman, I'd never have developed the plan which has relieved our sales force of that terrible incubus of samples.

"When I stepped into this job, our traveling men carried an assortment of samples weighing nearly fifty pounds. Why not substitute photos for samples, I reflected, one day. Our line is so extensive that a complete assortment of samples would weigh over one hundred pounds. Obviously an impossible weight for a man to carry all day.

"Pictures would mean that the entire line could be displayed; that the salesman could make perhaps 25 per cent. more calls in a day; that he would lack the self-consciousness which many men feel in lugging a heavy case, and that the man's energy would be conserved for the delivery of his canvass rather than wasted in physical effort.

"Against these advantages must be counted the disadvantage arising from the fact that no picture is quite so convincing a sales argument as the article itself.

"When I broached the idea to the sales force, their enthusiasm was unbounded. With the directors' O. K. I had portfolios prepared featuring our entire line in colored photos. These weighed but a trifle and could easily be carried under the arm.

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

"The first month after the inauguration of the new plan sales betrayed a sharp increase. The men were making more calls and selling a larger proportion of those upon whom they called.

"An unexpected advantage developed later. I found that as, from time to time, we added new men, we were able to obtain a rather higher quality of representatives because of the abolition of the sample-lugging. A vast amount of useless labor is thus expended daily. Some articles must be sold by sample. But many others can be equally as well demonstrated through pictures."

"Keep Your Samples in Good Condition"

"The condition in which samples are presented makes a world of difference in sales," said a traveling man. "I saw a new idea the other day," he continued. "In passing the sample-room of a hotel I noticed a clothing salesman displaying his line of men's suits to a local dealer. The trunk stood open, upright on one end; from it extended a sliding rack to a vertical standard and from the rack, suspended upon ordinary coat-hangers, hung perhaps a dozen or fifteen men's suits. There they were; well pressed and without a wrinkle; just as they would appear in a first-class retail establishment.

"Noting my interest, the salesman showed me how cleverly the rack was contrived to fold up and fit snugly into the trunk, the suits being still suspended in the familiar wardrobe manner. It developed that since using this device his sales had increased some 30 per cent., an increase which he attributed solely to the splendid condition in which his line was displayed.

"That started me to thinking. That season I was carrying a line of pineapple-juice. Its sale hinged, of course,

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

entirely upon the taste. If it pleased the prospect's palate he'd assume that it would please his patrons'. I was handicapped by the fact that the liquid when poured from the bottle I carried was likely to be lukewarm. All the frosty tang that made it so delicious when just off the ice was lost.

"When I returned to my home town I began to investigate the question of humidors.

"That clothing-man increased his sales by presenting his product in good shape,' I reflected. 'I can do the same.'

"Finally I ordered constructed a neat little box divided into compartments. One held a couple of glasses; another four bottles of my product; and the third consisted of a humidor lined with a non-conducting substance. This was large enough to contain two bottles.

"As I made each town thereafter I would have a couple of bottles put on ice overnight at the hotel. Next morning I'd put them in the humidor, where they kept cool all day. And what a difference when I poured out a glassful of the ice-cold beverage!

"Did it affect my sales? It more than doubled them, and I made my sales with half the effort previously required. Before this I had to *force* my goods over through sheer eloquence and nerve force. But with my thermos idea the product simply sold itself.

"Great stuff!' my prospects would exclaim, smacking their lips. 'I believe that will make a hit with my trade,' and out came my order book-and pencil."

A Salesman Explodes the Rainy-day Fallacy

"For several reasons, a salesman is always seeking excuses for knocking off work," said one, recently. "One is that he is not, like an office-man, under constant supervision. Another is that a great deal of his effort is wasted,

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

anyway, hence he cannot see a direct connection between diminished effort and decreased production. And a third is that selling, being non-productive work, is distasteful to most men.

“One of the salesman’s greatest bugbears is that of the rainy day. This tradition, that sales cannot be made on a rainy day, is one in which most salesmen believe implicitly. And it serves as an excuse for many a wasted hour at the movies or over a billiard-table.

“It never seemed reasonable to me. I argued that because on a rainy day, first, I’d find my prospects in; second, they’d have time to listen to me; and, third, there would be no competitors around. It should be a good time to make sales.

“One rainy day I went out determined to kill the jinx. In the first place I obtained more interviews from fewer calls than ever before. Furthermore, with no disturbing interruptions, I secured undivided attention. And finally, I found people just as willing to spend their money on a rainy day as on a sunny one. I came in that evening with a sheaf of good orders. Since then I’ve looked forward to rainy days as particularly favorable opportunities to break records.”

Sleuthing After Hours Provides this Man with Leads

“It was a fantastic item I ran across in a newspaper which suggested a novel plan of getting leads in my business,” said a salesman for a well-known time-saving office device. “The article dealt with the unique method of adding to his income evolved by a clerk in Paris.

“It was merely to go about the streets at night, barking like a dog in front of various houses. If an answering bark sounded from within, he promptly consulted the record which he carried with him of license-holders for dogs, and

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

in case the occupant's name did not appear, the municipality at once collected the amount due, plus a penalty, paying a certain commission to the discoverer.

"By some association of ideas, the thought sprang into my mind, 'I can increase my business by a little extra work evenings.'

"Next evening I covered the business district, making careful notations of the offices in which lights were burning.

"The following day I called, all primed with specific information. I explained that I knew that because of obsolete equipment the office force was obliged to work evenings, and I particularly emphasized the fact that the saving in supper money alone would soon pay for the appliance I represented.

"I made some sales. Not only was I assailing particularly good prospects, but, because of my previously acquired knowledge of the status of affairs, my canvass was more vigorously and convincingly delivered. Now I pursue this method consistently. Some of my best and biggest orders are traceable to this simple idea."

How this Salesman Secured a Big Account

"It is foolish to say that friendship doesn't count in business," said a sales manager. "It does, particularly in cases where goods of identical quality are offered at identically the same price. Almost every salesman has men in his territory to whom he can sell nothing because the purchaser is a personal friend of some one connected with a competing concern.

"Years ago I was selling plate and window glass. The field was dominated by four big houses, for one of which I was city salesman. A selling combination served to keep prices and quotations on an absolutely equal basis. There

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

was no difference in the quality of the product offered. So selling figured right down to a question of personality.

“Among the heaviest consumers in that city were a couple of sash-and-door firms. One of them divided its business about equally among the four glass concerns. The other bought exclusively from one house because the salesman was a relative of the owner. That single account served to justify a high salary to a man who was but a mediocre salesman.

“‘Now if I could get the strangle hold on Blaisdell’s business that Haskins has on Rand’s, I’d be worth a lot of money to the house,’ I reflected.

“The idea kept recurring to me. I began to quietly investigate Blaisdell’s habits. I learned that he lived in Glendale, a neighboring suburb; was fond of outdoor life; spent a good deal of time on the golf-links. I was a bachelor and foot-loose; could live where I pleased. One day I went out to Glendale and hired bachelor quarters in an apartment-house.

“My next move was to join the golf club. Saturday afternoons and Sundays found me on the links. I began to meet Blaisdell pretty frequently. It developed that, although in business hours he was a rather cold, unapproachable chap, outside the office he was a very companionable sort of fellow.

“It wasn’t long before we were going around the course together. Glendale proved to be a very sociable little community. Soon I began to find myself spending an evening at Blaisdell’s. Upon learning my prospect’s routine, I began to go in to town and come out on the same train. I formed one of a quartet which played a game of whist en route. Blaisdell was included. All this time I had nothing to say about glass. I called regularly, as I had been doing previously, and received my usual share of Blaisdell’s trade. I seldom saw him in business hours. The orders were placed by his purchasing agent, Duffy.

“One day Blaisdell walked into Duffy’s office while I

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

was there. He sat down and started talking about a game of golf we had played the previous Sunday.

“‘There’s a professional golfer demonstrating a new method up at Leatherbee’s,’ he remarked. ‘Let’s go out to lunch together and then size him up.’ That was the beginning of a series of noon engagements. Duffy began to place bigger orders with me.

“Autumn arrived. Blaisdell and I and three others spent two weeks in the Maine woods. I had carefully saved my vacation for just this purpose.

“A few days after my return I called at Blaisdell’s office. A big order was in the air.

“‘I’ve been instructed to place 80 per cent. of this with you,’ said Duffy. ‘The balance of 20 per cent. will be divided among the other fellows as a sort of consolation.’

“And that’s the way Blaisdell’s business was placed thereafter. I controlled four-fifths of it. To achieve this result had required about a year. As soon as my concern was convinced that I had a firm grip on this profitable account naturally my salary took a jump. In fact, it was more than doubled.

“It was this factor, too, that contributed to my appointment as sales manager when ours accepted another position. You may call this policy of mine cold-blooded and hypocritical. It wasn’t altogether hypocritical. I grew to like Blaisdell sincerely. As to its being cold-blooded, well, business is business.”

This Salesman Went Over the Head of the Purchasing Agent and Landed an Order

“For a long time I had been trying to get a slice of the Barker Corporation’s business,” said a paper salesman, “but never received the slightest encouragement. As they bought in car-load lots from the mill for distribution to their

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

branches, their business meant a great deal to the man who controlled it. The purchasing agent, Miller, was a relative of the sales manager of one of our competitors, and the order was always awarded purely and simply upon that basis.

"One day the usual request for a bid came into our office, and as it lay in my territory it was turned over to me.

"'Why bother to submit figures?' said my boss. 'There's no chance there.'

"'It's time that graft was exposed,' I replied. 'I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll submit a bid that's about 10 per cent. below actual cost. Then after the Bryan-Martin people get the job, I'll go over the purchasing agent's head with the evidence. I don't believe that old man Barker would stand for this sort of thing.'

"'It won't do any harm to try it,' agreed Thompson. 'We've nothing to lose and everything to gain. But I've little hope of its accomplishing anything.'

"So our bid was mailed, 10 per cent. below actual cost. As usual, the job went to the Bryan-Martin Company.

"A few days later I called at Barker's and demanded an interview with the president. I was equipped with samples of our product, also with an automatic paper-tester.

"I was shown into the old man's office. It was a delicate moment. Possibly I had the wrong steer. Maybe Barker himself was behind the policy of favoritism.

"I explained the reason for my visit; came out flat-footed with an assertion of my suspicions of Miller; flashed my samples, tester, and carbon of our bid.

"'Now, Mr. Barker,' said I, 'Miller's policy is costing you a good many thousands of dollars a year. Let's consult your records and ascertain the figure at which that last order was awarded; compare it with our figures, which are considerably below cost; test the competing papers and we'll know where we're at.'

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

"As I suspected, Bryan-Martin had received the order at a price 30 per cent. higher than ours. The test showed our paper to be considerably tougher than our competitor's. Then Barker rang for Miller.

"What's the explanation?' he demanded.

"Miller saw that the game was up. He stammered a feeble defense which his employer cut short.

"The cashier will pay you off,' said Barker. 'I'd like to sue you for what you've cost this concern during the past four years.' And Miller sneaked from the room.

"Will you take this order at 5 per cent. below Bryan-Martin's figures?' inquired the president. 'I can't expect you to take it at your original figure.'

"Certainly,' was my reply.

"And he promptly 'phoned a countermand to our competitors. A new purchasing agent was at once installed. Future orders were awarded to the lowest bidder, and to show the concern's gratitude for the service we had rendered, in case of a tie we always get the business."

Selling by Questioning

"In selling difficult prospects, I have found that a method somewhat resembling a cross-examination yields good results," said a successful salesman.

"I aim to extract affirmatives to a series of carefully planned questions, and then by summing up the evidence prove that but one conclusion can be drawn—a purchase.

"Here is about the way the interview proceeds:

"Is it not true, Mr. Jones,' I inquire, 'that if this machine will save you the labor of two employees its purchase will be a good investment?'

"Yes,' replies the prospect.

"Is it not evident, from the testimonials which I have

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

shown you, that this is what it has accomplished in concerns which were confronted with practically the same problems which meet you?’

“‘Yes.’

“‘Does it not logically follow that, everything else being equal, if your competitors operate at lower cost than you do, they will eventually have a distinct advantage in gaining a market?’

“‘Yes.’

“‘Does not our offer of a free installation—you to have the privilege of returning the machine without one cent’s obligation if at the end of thirty days it has not demonstrated its merit—afford you complete protection?’

“‘Yes.’

“‘Well, then, Mr. Jones, you have agreed with me that your problems are similar to those that have been solved by this machine; that if your competitors use it and you don’t, they have the advantage of you; that by installing it you are not risking one cent, and that if it will do what we claim (and our testimonials are proof that it will) it is a good investment—then, Mr. Jones, in the light of these facts and your attitude, how can you escape the conclusion that the one proper, logical move for you to make is to put your name to this blank applying for a thirty-day trial, entirely at our risk and expense?’

“In most cases, the prospect hesitates a moment, reflects that there is no way of extricating himself from the predicament in which he finds himself, and signs. Sometimes, however, this is not enough.

“‘But my problems are not identical with those of the cases you have named,’ he sometimes objects.

“‘That is the only question remaining in your mind?’ I then remark. ‘If I could remove that objection, you would give it a trial?’

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

“‘Yes,’ he replies.

“Then comes the struggle to show him that in all essentials his problems *are* similar to those of concerns where the machine has been successfully applied. During this process, which often involves some research work into his office routine, I unobtrusively emphasize the fact that he himself has said that the entire question hinges upon this one point. This is to prevent his advancing still another objection when this feature has been effectually covered.

“Then when I force an admission that his problems *do* resemble those of others, at least in so far as the machine is concerned, I do not hesitate to boldly state:

“‘You recall, Mr. Jones, that you said that if I could remove that objection you’d give the machine a trial? You admit that you’re now convinced. Then now is the time to put your name down on this blank.’ And almost always he does it.

“My theory regarding this cross-examination style of selling, as compared with the usual simple affirmation, is that it impresses the prospect with the questioner’s reasonableness. It sounds more like an honest effort to get at the truth than a mere attempt to force a sale. Still further, it makes the prospect feel that he has convinced himself. It works well with me; doubtless it’s applicable to the sale of many other commodities.”

Team-work in Selling

“The psychology of a sale has been analyzed from a dozen different angles,” remarked an advertising-man. “And unquestionably many valuable findings have been established.

“Only recently a life-insurance salesman explained his canvass to me. It consisted of three parts: 1. The explanation, with five points to be thoroughly covered. 2. The proof, with three. 3. The closing, with seven. Of course, this systematic procedure makes for efficiency.

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

“There are, however, many indeterminable factors in a sale. And one is that half of the transaction represented by the prospect. There is no man living who can sell every man upon whom he calls. In my profession, two problems face us. We must first sell *our* services to the client, and, second, sell *his* product to his public.

“In our organization, we find that team-work is a great aid in selling. We like to make an appointment with a prospect and then present our case *en masse* with four or five of us present. For some reason, the moral force of a group solicitation is much greater than that exerted by a single individual. Here again is an indeterminate factor, difficult to explain, but undeniably a fact.

“As the acquisition of a new client may mean an addition to our income of thirty or forty thousand dollars a year, we find that it pays to devote considerable thought to presenting our claims clearly and convincingly. As a consequence, we conduct rehearsals of our canvass. Each man represents a certain specific phase of our work and he is selected to talk upon it. Then when we are in action, the canvass proceeds without a hitch. By the use of a code of unobtrusive signals the solicitation is passed from one man to another without any break in the continuity of the program.

“This idea of team-work in selling, with a rehearsal beforehand, is applicable to many lines. In closing a difficult prospect in almost any line, two tongues are better than one. Perhaps other salesmen will find the tip of value.”

Slipping It Over

“A good salesman always seeks to surround the actual signing of the order-blank with an air of casual certainty,” remarked a sales manager, “a sort of taking-it-for-granted attitude—this although the writing of the signature may

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

be the culmination of much thought and effort upon his part.

“He knows from experience, if not instinctively, that here is the last ditch at which many a prospect makes his final stand. By pretending to ignore its presence, he often succeeds in easily hurdling it, accompanied by his customer. He doesn’t say, ‘Please place your signature here, Mr. Jones, signing your full name,’ but rather, ‘Just scratch your John Henry here, Mr. Jones,’ and very likely he keeps on talking right through the operation of signing in order to avoid that moment of silent reflection during which so many sales have been lost.

“I note that the same idea is applied in printed salesmanship. Yesterday I received a folder written for the purpose of securing subscriptions to a magazine. It wound up as follows:

“DON’T SEND MONEY

“Don’t bother to inclose a check, or even to write a letter. The post-card will do, and is easier and quicker. With one stroke of the pen you will solve your entire business problem. The mailing of this card will bring the Blank Magazine to you for a whole year, assuring you valuable and new ideas and insuring you against costly failures.

“LAST CHANCE OFFER

“24 Issues of the Blank at the Present \$4 Rate

“You see the idea? The thought of making a profitable investment is featured; that of spending money subordinated. Just beneath the closing argument was the perforated line of a self-addressed post-card to be detached and mailed.”

Handling a Recalcitrant Buyer

“There are buyers, not many, to be sure,” remarked a salesman, reflectively, “who consider the privilege of insulting salesmen one of the most valued perquisites of their jobs,

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

“In handling this type it is well to remember that a bully is generally a coward and that strong-arm methods are in order.

“Last week I called on the buyer for a sizable concern. It was my ninth effort to gain a hearing; this, mind you, from a man who is hired to post himself on goods required for the firm’s purposes, and their current prices.

“‘What! is that peddler here again?’ I heard him shout. ‘Doesn’t he know when he’s licked? Tell him to beat it. I won’t look at his stuff.’

“For a minute I saw red. I pushed open the gate, shoved aside an office-boy, and strode into the inner sanctum.

“‘Now, my friend,’ said I, ‘I’ve stood about all I’m going to from you. You’ve insulted me to my face, behind my back, directly and by innuendo. You’re hired for just one purpose—to buy reliable goods at the lowest price. You can’t hold down your job as it should be held unless you give salesmen from reputable houses a hearing. Are you going to inspect my line right here and now or shall I have my chief get in touch with yours with a view to an investigation of your firm’s purchasing department?’

“The fellow eyed me in amazement, then began to wilt. Without waiting for a reply, I opened my grips and, gradually cooling off, began to exhibit my line. Within a few minutes we were deep in a discussion of qualities and prices—fifteen minutes later I left with a good-sized order.

“That this plan wouldn’t always work I’m well aware. But when you’ve everything to gain and nothing to lose, and size up your man as a subject for this style of attack, it’s worth a trial.”

Points of Contact for the Salesman

“Yes, Stevens is a pretty tough customer,” agreed Davis, of the Butler Company sales force, “but still, like every

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

one else, he has his vulnerable points. Let's see." Extracting a note-book from his pocket, he consulted it. "Oh yes, he's a crank on coins. Talk coins to him and he'll rapidly melt. Only the other day I mailed him a clipping about some ancient coins discovered in the step of the mainmast of the old frigate *Portsmouth* which they're dismantling up in Boston."

"What is that mysterious volume?" inquired Ransome, also a Knight of the Grip. "A sort of Who's Who of your prospects?"

"Just that," was the reply. "Look it over."

"A page for each customer," remarked Ransome, as he turned the pages. "And a line for each subject." He read aloud:

"Stevens, L. J., Rochester, New York.

Politics. Republican—very conservative.

Hobbies. Old coins and stamps; also relics of the Mound-builders.

Favorite Sports. Motor-boating. Not a baseball fan.

Religion, if any. Not a church member.

Personal Interests. Likes to talk about his boy William now at Cornell. Latter on track team.

Topic Last Discussed. Coins. His boy's achievements.

Miscellaneous Data. Married. Unsociable on first acquaintance. Requires humoring. Don't oppose him in an argument.'

"What's the idea?" he inquired, as he returned the note-book.

"I cover a big territory and see my customers so seldom that I need this device to reinforce my memory. And as I handle a line in which price and quality are identical with those of my competitors, sales are made purely and simply

TOLD IN A PULLMAN SMOKING-ROOM

through personality. This little book has proved to be a life-saver."

"A mighty good scheme, and one that I believe I'll adopt," replied Ransome.

"There's a delicate compliment implied," said Davis. "Each man is pleased that his conversation of months previous should have made so deep an impression. It certainly lubricates sales."

A Young Lawyer Wins Out

"Dignity, 'the dignity of the profession,' that was the bugbear that nearly put me down for the count when I started to practise," said a young lawyer in a growing Western city, recently, "and it wasn't until I reflected that there's nothing so dignified as a corpse that I took a tumble to myself and began to make some money.

"I landed here with a few hundred dollars and my degree; that was all.

"I promptly hired a couple of offices, adopted the proper magisterial facial expression, and waited for clients to throng in with cases. But it must have been a poor season for thronging. Just one man thronged the first month; he was a life-insurance salesman.

"The situation began to get on my nerves. 'Peter Sterling bucked just this game, and finally won out,' I reflected; 'but I'm no hero of a novel. In the story-books, a rich client always steps in at the last moment. But I'd just like to know how many men in real life have started out as lawyers and ended up as book agents. Now if I were an insurance man, I could get out and stir up business, but the dignified traditions of my profession won't permit such tactics.'

"One morning I began to do a little figuring. My bank-book showed a balance of a little over one hundred dollars.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

My office rent, due the following week, would reduce it to seventy dollars. 'I've got to get action,' was my conclusion. 'There's nothing very dignified about dodging creditors. I'm going to start something.'

"Filling my pockets with cards, I started in on a straight soliciting campaign, covering merchants, real-estate men, etc. I explained that, although new to the city, I was old in legal lore, gave a few minutes' talk designed to impress the listener with my erudition, then, after requesting that I be called up when need for my services arose, I departed. I saw about thirty prospects the first day.

"No one called for the police; I couldn't see that my aggressive methods horrified any one. In practically every case I was accorded a most courteous reception. The result of the day's work was that I returned to my office with over two hundred dollars' worth of bad accounts to collect, a type of business which I did not particularly desire, and a damage suit to defend. The delivery-truck of one merchant had injured a child a few days previous and he had been sued for five thousand dollars.

"Daily thereafter I kept at it, covering the down-town section systematically. And not a week passed but that I stirred up a little business. That was five years ago. Last year my practice netted me seventy-five hundred dollars. Now my clients come to me, but the nucleus of my business came from a straight office-to-office book-agent method of attack."

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

A Salesman Who Didn't Grasp Human Nature

"It is said that an actor always spends his vacations in theaters watching other actors at work," said a salesman, recently. "One thing is certain: nothing is ever quite so interesting to a man as his own line of work—that is, if he is in the line in which he belongs. So with me, nothing is quite as interesting as to study another salesman's technique.

"Last week I happened to be exchanging reminiscences with an old friend who is proprietor of a local advertising agency. While we were talking a salesman's card was sent in, and my friend gave orders that he be admitted.

"It developed that the man represented a concern which had published a set of books dealing with advertising. My friend, naturally, was interested. The salesman's approach was beyond criticism; he had no difficulty in arousing his prospect's interest, and he had advanced to the promising stage of inducing my friend to take one of the books in his own hands when he made a fatal mistake.

"'Now, Mr. Carvell,' he remarked, impressively, 'you can see for yourself the value of these books. You recognize the standing of the writers, you agree with me that one good idea adapted and applied from their experience would repay you tenfold for the purchase price. Here is another point.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

Doesn't it mean something to you that Mr. Elkins, of the Elkins Agency, the largest in this city, and Mr. Temple, of the Brown-Temple Agency, located only a block distant, have testified to their belief in these volumes by purchasing? Here are their signed orders,' and he flashed them. Then he went on eulogizing the ability and standing of Mr. Elkins and Mr. Temple, who, he must have known, were competitors of Carvell.

"Now I don't know anything about Elkins or Temple, but I do understand human nature well enough to realize how bitter and inevitable is professional jealousy.

"Carvell promptly froze, returned the book, and announced that he was not interested. The salesman, puzzled at the abrupt change in his attitude, fought desperately for a few minutes, but finally surrendered and made his exit. He had killed the sale by talking too much. What he considered one of his strongest arguments really militated against him.

"A grasp of a few primary factors in human nature is indispensable to a salesman. This one apparently lacked that knowledge."

This Solicitor Found Old Man Hoskins' Vulnerable Spot

"It's no use seeing old Hoskins," remarked Braman, of the Braman Advertising Agency, to his new partner, Stanton, a recent arrival in the city. "He's an opinionated old ass, and because back in Millard Fillmore's administration he once worked on a newspaper, he thinks his own copy is beyond criticism. His ads. are the joke of the city, but if you go in and as much as hint that they can be improved upon he's likely to call you a conceited young whipper-snapper. Too bad. That account is worth three or four thousand a year to some agency," and Braman frowned as

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

he recalled numerous fruitless attempts to make Hoskins of The Hoskins Brush Company see the light.

"A case for diplomatic handling," remarked Stanton. "I suppose he's pretty touchy on the subject now. Probably every agency in town has taken a shot at him."

"Yes, it's like waving a red flag at a bull even to say the word 'advertising' to him. The feeble stuff he runs brings him no business. He advertises merely for the pleasure of seeing his name in print. Now this man Elwood, on the other hand—" And Braman continued his conversation with the idea of posting the new man on local conditions.

"Good morning, Mr. Hoskins." The scene was Hoskins' office, several days later. "Stanton is my name. I'm a new arrival here and I understood that you were recognized as one of the best posted men on advertising in this community. I've come to ask a great favor of you. I want your advice regarding the proper handling of an account I've just obtained. As a stranger, I'm not thoroughly posted on media, local buying habits, etc. Five minutes of your time may save me thousands of dollars," and seating himself in the chair Hoskins proffered him, the caller was soon deep in discussion of the pros and cons of the proper method of handling one of his agency's new accounts. Proofs of prospective ads. soon covered Hoskins' desk; shortly the old man was laying out a dummy. If this were fiction instead of fact, Stanton would have left the office with Hoskins' business. But it required several calls covering a two months' period to bring about this happy culmination.

Finally, one day Hoskins, who had taken quite a fancy to this modest young man who was so quick and ready to accept his suggestions, remarked:

"I've been thinking it over, Mr. Stanton, and I've con-

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

cluded that I simply haven't time to give my advertising the attention it requires. I'm going to turn it over to your agency. Your staff can develop my ideas; it won't cost me any more and you can pocket the commissions from the magazines."

"And the best strong-arm men in the business have fallen down with Hoskins!" ejaculated Braman, when he heard the news. "Stanton, you're all right. You must have hypnotized him!"

"No, merely flattered him," replied Stanton. "If not overdone, it pays. It's not the first time I've used that method. You can sell merchandise that way just as well as professional services."

Strategy Sold \$70,000 Worth of Pictures for this Art Dealer

"Doubtless there are tricks in every trade," said an art dealer, "but I'll wager that my trade has more of them than any two other lines combined.

"One of the biggest sales I ever made was due to strategy. I'll tell you about it," and switching on the lights in his gallery, we sat down before a magnificent example of Brangwyn's brush—a new acquisition.

"Three of the heaviest buyers of pictures in this country to-day are Taft of Cincinnati, Johnson of Philadelphia, and Huntington of Los Angeles. I was after one of the trio, but couldn't get a hearing. He wouldn't come to my establishment, and refused me permission to deliver my pictures for inspection. Said he always bought on the advice of New York experts.

"One afternoon I carefully packed some of my choice canvasses, among them examples of the work of Sagantini, Boecklin, and Melchers from the moderns, and also several

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

old masters; placed them in the tonneau of my machine and made for the suburbs. Toward sunset I came to the big estate of my intended victim.

"I pulled up by the roadside, tinkered with my machine a minute to effectually put it out of commission, then made for the mansion.

"The owner's wife was seated on the front porch. I explained that, unfortunately, my machine had broken down, that nightfall was near, and that I was encumbered with over one hundred thousand dollars' worth of pictures. Could I ask the favor of leaving them overnight for safe keeping? Permission was readily granted; the butler was assigned to the task of helping my chauffeur and myself in carrying the precious pictures, and in ten minutes they were stacked in the front hall. Before leaving I took pains to remove the wrappings. Then I took my departure, promising to call next day with another machine.

"The afternoon of the following day found me pulling up under the millionaire's porte-cochère. The magnate himself greeted me.

"'Upon my arrival home last evening I took the liberty of glancing at the pictures you left here yesterday,' he explained. 'Are they for sale? If so, I'd like to hear at what price.'

"We entered, and he indicated the particular pictures which appealed to him. I quoted my prices, and in a half-hour left with a check for seventy thousand dollars. Since then he's become a regular client."

How a 25-cent Badge Increased Williams' Commissions \$25 Weekly

"Well, I'm about ready to quit," soliloquized Williams, as he sank on to a park bench at the end of his first week of attempting to sell patent gas-fixtures for the gas company.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

"I should have known better than to have tackled this door-bell-pulling job. My canvass is a corker; I can demonstrate that these fixtures represent investments rather than expenditures; that they save both gas and eyes; but it's the difficulty of reaching the buyer that's flooring me. The maids turn me away from the door in about nine calls out of ten. If only I could scheme out some method of getting past the outer guard, I'd have no difficulty in closing the sale." And with a despondent sigh, Williams boarded the car for the main office, prepared to hand in his resignation.

"Look here, now," expostulated the sales manager, after hearing Williams' story, "you can sell this thing, but we haven't yet struck the right scheme. Here's an idea that occurred to me to-day and I want you to try it out Monday. I'm going to equip you with a nickeled badge, marked 'Gas Inspector.' Then when the maid answers the door, just flash it, walk in, and demand to see the mistress. In houses where the mistress answers the bell, follow the same tactics, avoiding a disclosure of your real errand until you've got well inside."

"Mr. Elkins, you've struck the one weak spot," was Williams' enthusiastic response. "I'll try it Monday and I'll bet it will work." And work it did. His method was simplicity itself.

Upon gaining an entrance, he would proceed to make a cursory inspection of all the fixtures on the ground floor, making cabalistic notations in a note-book during the process. Then came a short discussion of lighting problems, the admission on the part of the owner that the lights were unsatisfactory, leading logically to a sale of the improved fixtures, which Williams carried in his grip. The offer to accept but a nominal payment down, the balance to go on the regular bill in easy instalments, coupled with the realization that in a few months' time the fixtures would pay

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

for themselves in decreased gas consumption, invariably closed the sale.

"And it's all due to this little tin badge," remarked Williams to the manager, as he counted his week's commissions, totaling over thirty dollars, the following Saturday.

A Novel Approach Which Sold Books for this Man

It is generally conceded that books are the most difficult article to sell through canvassing. This is particularly true if leads are not supplied through responses to advertising. Successful book men, however, reap large rewards. Some of them earn as high as twenty thousand dollars a year in commissions. A great many net from eighty to one hundred dollars per week.

A publishing-house in New York City, some years ago, issued a Jewish encyclopedia. It was a high-priced edition. The field obviously was among prosperous Hebrews. And as New York City's population numbers approximately one million of this race, that plainly was the place to seek sales.

By far the most successful of the corps of agents was himself a Hebrew. A young man who was being broken into the business one day asked permission to accompany him on his rounds, with a view to picking up pointers. The star salesman readily acquiesced.

"The main point," he explained, as they ascended in the elevator of an office-building in which he intended to operate that day, "is to command the prospect's undivided attention at the very opening. No one wants to listen to a canvass. But if you focus his interest at once, then continue your canvass without permitting interruptions, your sale is half made. But you'll see how I do it," he concluded, as he opened an office door.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

Passing quickly through the anteroom, which happened to be empty, they entered an inner office. Seated at a flat-top desk, and so absorbed in checking up a row of figures that he hardly noticed their entrance, was a dignified-looking gentleman—the proprietor of the establishment.

Bang! went a book vigorously slammed down on the desk-top by the star salesman. It was one volume of the encyclopedia. The victim jumped several inches and stared at the intruders in astonishment.

“You are a Jew!” shouted the agent in stentorian tones, leveling an accusing finger at the occupant of the office. At this point the neophyte began to anxiously inspect the exits, prepared to make a speedy getaway.

“And so am I,” continued the agent, mildly, drawing up a chair and seating himself by the proprietor. “I’m proud of it and I hope you are. We’re a great race; among our ranks we number some of the greatest figures of history, geniuses in all the arts, statesmen, financiers, composers. But to thoroughly appreciate the part we’ve played and are playing in the world’s affairs we must possess this magnificent new ‘cyclopedia,’ etc., etc.

At one blow the agent had demolished all preliminary defenses, had battered down the prospect’s guard, and was over the redoubt. Had he opened along conventional lines, “I am Mr. Blank of the White Publishing Company,” the victim would have had an opportunity to bring forward his tried and tested defensive tactics. But the novelty of the attack had completely demoralized him. Following his first impulse of anger, humor had come as a reaction. To find himself accused of being a Jew as though it were a disgrace, and then to find his accuser admitting that he, too, was one of the same race, injected a comedy element which lubricated the entire transaction and, as the salesman claimed, he certainly gained the prospect’s attention.

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

It required about ten minutes to close the deal. And the salesman walked out with another forty dollars' commission to his credit.

"Aim High," says this Solicitor

"It is a rule," said a successful salesman who now represents a correspondence school of commerce which charges nearly one hundred dollars for its course, "the bigger the man, the more easily he's interviewed. This fact was brought home to me only recently.

"I was anxious to obtain a foothold for my present proposition in a famous industrial organization which employs thousands of men.

"For some days I worked on subordinates and low-salaried men, with little success. The price looked too high. Finally I took a tumble to myself and resolved to tackle the president of the company, a man whose salary exceeds that of our country's chief magistrate

"I found no difficulty in obtaining an audience. He received me courteously and I stated my proposition clearly and briefly. He seemed favorably impressed and asked me to leave my literature and call again the following day. Next day I returned, and he informed me that he himself intended promptly to enroll.

"The rest was too easy. Backed by the force of the president's example, I sailed through the plant, signing up men right and left. Before I got through I had secured nearly one hundred and seventy-five pupils."

The Sign on the Office Door

"You never know just where you're going to unearth business," remarked the proprietor of a big manufacturing

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

plant. "I once introduced myself to two men whose conversation I could not help overhearing as they sat next me in the smoking-compartment of a Pullman.

"They were planning to organize a company for the manufacture of a shoe-machine attachment. Three months later, one of them came into my office, and during the next five years I billed them for over two hundred thousand dollars' worth of work. Finally they built their own factory.

"But an incident which occurred but a few weeks after I started in business sticks in my mind.

"I was a youngster at the time and had just bought into this concern. I knew little about the operating end, and concluded that I'd get out and see what I could do in rustling business.

"Through leads obtained from patent lawyers I landed a few small jobs. Late one afternoon I was going down in the elevator of an office-building, and as I passed the fifth floor I glimpsed the words, 'Automatic Telephone Co.' on a door. The name preceding 'Automatic' was hidden by an obstructing corner.

"'What concern is that?' I reflected. 'I wonder if they're worth interviewing?'

"I glanced at my watch. It was late. 'I guess I won't bother,' I mused. 'It's too late to-day.' But, arrived at the street floor, I obeyed an impulse and, boarding another elevator, went up to the fifth.

"I walked in and found a man just rolling down his desk to go home. Presenting him with my card, I stated my errand.

"'Glad you called,' he replied. 'We're just closing arrangements for financial backing and will begin to manufacture immediately. I'll bring our engineer over to your plant next week and see if we can get together.'

"Within three months we were at work for that company, and during the subsequent four years we did one hundred

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

and seventy-five thousand dollars' worth of work for them. To-day we have more systematized methods of securing business and, of course, also manufacture our own products. But I've often thought how near I came to not bothering to go up-stairs again to get that job which really formed the foundation of my present success."

Selling Securities to Women

"I sell securities," remarked a clean-cut, vigorous-looking young man, "and, of late years, I have sold chiefly to women. So successful have I been in this field that now all the leads which come into the office from the other sex are turned over to me.

"Often I am asked to explain why it is I am able to secure the confidence of women so easily. It seems to be well understood that different tactics apply in selling to the two sexes, but most men seem to feel that it is hopeless to try to explain the intricacies of finance to women, and think that I must possess some secret formula.

"The solution of the problem is very simple. It consists in selling oneself rather than in selling securities. Sell yourself successfully and the rest is easy. It may sound like cant to say so, but I think I am thoroughly sincere when I say that the fact that my efforts have prevented hundreds of women from succumbing to the lures of the fake promoters means more to me than my own financial recompense. Time after time I've put a spoke in the wheel of some plausible rascal who was just about to unload a block of worthless oil or mining stock upon some credulous spinster or widow. Among the Wallingfords who infest our financial district my name is anathema.

"This crusading attitude of mine is my greatest asset. I sell nothing but gilt-edged bonds or well-secured notes.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

If I can't sell absolutely sound securities, I won't sell any. My problem, therefore, is merely to make it clear just what I stand for, or, in other words, to tell the truth.

"Generally speaking, a woman's world is more personal than a man's. She is interested in people rather than in abstractions. Therefore, I sound a personal note. I make no effort to confine the interview to bonds. I let the conversation wander as it will, feeling certain that, as we talk, the customer is intuitively making up her mind about me. If I ring true, I shall make a sale. If I don't, I won't. Women's perceptions are keen. Even when they buy from the fly-by-night gentry, it is because, with inner misgivings, they succumb to the lure of imaginary dividends. It is not because the promoter has really secured their confidence.

"As a result of years of square dealing, many new customers now come to me through the recommendation of satisfied clients. In selling bonds to women, first sell yourself, that's my advice. And I've an idea that this applies to many other things—automobiles, for example, or real estate."

Closing Customers on the First Call

"Have you ever called upon a prospect for weeks, finally demanded a definite Yes or No, closed him fairly easily, and then reflected upon the hours you'd wasted through not having had the nerve to 'push for a close' long before?" Thus queried a veteran salesman, now a sales manager.

"I've a theory that the phenomenal records made by star salesmen are often largely due to their profiting by the pioneer work of the rank and file who lack that power to force an immediate decision. All over the country, millions of convinced prospects are just waiting for a man of determination to come in and demand a definite answer. A good strong closer—what an asset he is to a sales force!

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

“It’s easy to get men who have a pleasing personality, an excellent approach, power of interesting a prospect, and ability to present a clear-cut exposition of a proposition. But when it comes to closing, to getting the signature on the dotted line, that’s another story.

“It’s a great mistake to assume that several calls are required to close a prospect. I’ll admit that, in some cases, they are, but it’s my firm conviction that the vast majority of sales made on the third or fourth call could just as well have been closed on the first. A man whose record indicates that he is the ablest life-insurance salesman in the United States has asserted that practically all his sales are made on the initial visit. Almost never does he call twice on the same prospect.

“What is needed is a different mental attitude on the part of the salesman. If you visualize your call as a mere preliminary move, that’s all it will be. But if you open your interview with the dogged resolution to close that sale right there on the spot, to fight it out on that line if it takes all day—then there’s a mighty good chance that you’ll score a knockout in the first round. I’ve developed many mediocre men into stars. And that was the principle upon which I based my training.”

Canvassing Methods Sold this Gas Heater

“Bill, we have a world-beater here in this gas heater,” said Tom Winslow to his partner, Bill Murray, “but sales are not running as they should. Something is wrong. Our store window pulls considerable business, our advertising returns are satisfactory, our distribution through the hardware and department stores is thoroughly perfected. But in spite of all this, there’s a vast public which should be buying our heater and which apparently doesn’t realize its existence.”

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

"I've been wondering if a house-to-house crew of canvassers couldn't stir up business," suggested Murray. "Send wagon-loads of heaters out with a couple of good men to pull the door-bells. We'll offer the heaters on instalments and see how that plan works."

"It sounds mighty good to me," was the reply. "I wonder we didn't think of it long ago."

An offer of a moderate drawing account plus a liberal commission brought scores of applicants. The most promising were promptly culled from the crowd and the campaign was inaugurated.

Each salesman was first thoroughly drilled on the heater's talking points.

"Remember," said Murray, "we have the only heater on the market which does not exhaust the oxygen. That feature, there"—he indicated the vent pipe—"puts us in a class by ourselves. Talk hygiene. Explain that though our heater costs fifteen dollars, as against our competitors' four dollars, it's the only safe one for sale. And emphasize the fact that a five-dollar payment down puts it in the house."

The first day's results were disappointing. The canvassers were not yet limbered up. The following day, orders began to come in. By the end of the week it was evident that the plan was a success. To-day this company maintains canvassing crews in many large cities. It sells more heaters by this method than by any other.

Putting on the Screws Helps this Man's Sales

"I sell a twenty-dollar set of business books," remarked a salesman, recently, "and consequently my entire canvass emphasizes the fact that the customer is not making a purchase, but making an investment—one that will pay big dividends in an increased salary check."

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

"I thoroughly believe in the value of my books, but, naturally, I find many men who can't see where they're worth the money.

"Many of my sales, therefore, are made by appealing to an entirely different motive. And I find that it's one of the strongest in human nature. This is the very natural desire to stand well with the boss.

"I obtain access to a big concern, for instance; say it's a wholesale house. First I sell the proprietor. As a rule, that is not difficult. He knows that one new idea applied throughout his establishment will repay him for his expenditure. And few men are so self-satisfied as to deny that they can find one new, practicable idea from my volumes.

"Then I request and generally obtain permission to canvass his clerks. The bookkeeper supplies me with a list of names and I check off each one as I seat myself at the bearer's desk.

"First, I deliver my usual canvass, featuring the investment value of the purchase. But twenty dollars looks a good deal larger to a twenty-dollar-a-week clerk than it does to the twenty-thousand-dollar-a-year proprietor.

"If this fails of effect, I flash the boss's signed order; explain that it is with the latter's permission I am canvassing the force and say:

"Now look here: in addition to the actual increase in earning capacity this purchase means for you, what about the impression on the boss? He wants you fellows to display some ambition. The greater your ability, the larger his profits. He believes in the value of these books. His signed order proves it. Now, then, do you want to pit your judgment against his? Do you want him to look over my list of sales after I'm through and check off the names of those who so lack interest in their jobs that they won't

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

pay one dollar a week for twenty weeks to increase their value to him? Of course you don't. Just put your John Henry right here [I place the order-blank on the desk]; pay me a dollar down and the books will be promptly delivered. And the boss will know that you've got enough interest in your work to want to increase your knowledge and efficiency. When raise-time comes around, it ought to help some.'

"Does this close them? If it didn't, I wouldn't be banking over one hundred and fifty dollars in commissions every week."

Capitalizing Human Vanity

"Many years ago," said a salesman who has sold everything from bonds to bird-cages, "a canny Scotchman accumulated a fortune through a very simple idea. He posed as the compiler of an anthology of Scottish poetry. He realized that thousands of aspiring poets and poetesses found it impossible to break into print, and he proposed to have them represented in his great work. He went about the country soliciting contributions from various rhymesters—the only stipulation being that the bards should purchase a certain number of volumes for distribution to their friends. Thus he automatically created a tremendous sale for the volume, and, as the price was very high, cleaned up a large sum. And who shall say that his purchasers did not get their money's worth? Consider the lasting satisfaction to be derived from having one's poetry published in a national anthology.

"This formula, with slight variations, has been worked ever since and proves perennially successful. At one time I solicited a selected list for a volume called *Who's Who in the West*. It was nothing but a slightly disguised appeal to human vanity. We proposed to publish a book containing

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

photos and brief write-ups of the eminent citizens of several states. We placed the proposition on a lofty plane by starting with the Governors and other prominent figures. There is no law to prevent one's putting whom he pleases into a book of this type. With these as decoys, it was then a simple matter to approach Samuel Persimmon, popular proprietor of Bakersfield's Bustling Beehive, and candidate for the school committee, and suggest that he, too, consent to figure in this great volume of notables.

"'Naturally, Mr. Persimmon, you will desire a copy for your library table,' he was informed. 'The price is one hundred dollars. This includes all expenses, cost of the half-tone photo, etc.'

"'Would you believe that grown men would fall for it? Well, they fell all over themselves to get in. It offered many a man an opportunity to pose to his wife. It meant that future generations of the Persimmon family could point with pride to the achievements of their illustrious forebear. I felt no compunctions in taking the money. They got their money's worth and I gained a wonderful insight into human nature.

"'Some of these schemes, however, are distinctly questionable and savor of actual trickery. I heard of one of this type the other day. The proposition is an encyclopedia and it is worked as follows:

"'The canvasser secures his audience by claiming that he has nothing to sell. He then displays the printed sheets to the prospect and informs him that, because of the latter's exalted position in the community, which makes his name invaluable as a reference, the publisher wishes to make him a present of a complete set.

"'You see,' continues the canvasser, 'if I can say that Mr. Julius Spoopendyke possesses a copy of this colossal work, it will result in sales to scores of citizens who, realizing

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

Mr. Spoopendyke's intelligence and culture, will feel inclined to follow suit.'

"Mr. Spoopendyke, who has always secretly felt that, were he not so modest, he would have been elected President, radiates satisfaction and consents to accept this tribute to his fame. Compliments are exchanged and all goes merry as a marriage-bell. It's one of those great moments in small lives that the cartoonist pictures. The canvasser arises to depart, then suddenly remarks:

"'Oh, by the way, Mr. Spoopendyke, these books, as you see, are not yet bound. We'll be delighted to bind the set for you at a nominal figure, offering you a choice of styles and colors. Just select the type of binding you want and put your John Henry here. Because we do this work in great quantities we can include your set for the absurd figure of four dollars a volume.'

"Mr. Spoopendyke, hypnotized, signs and the trap is sprung."

This Salesman Demonstrated the Necessity for Using His Product

"For a long time I had been trying to sell the Harris Company our patent check-protector," said Stewart, star salesman for his organization, "but I couldn't quite put it over. As the company has branches in every state in the Union, it meant a big order. I'd convinced the treasurer, the purchasing agent, and the cashier of the main office, but I couldn't get old man Harris's O. K. Said he'd never had a check raised and didn't think it could be done, with the old machine he used. But during my frequent solicitations the boss and I got on very friendly terms. That's why I had the nerve finally to take a long shot.

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

"One of our agents, a local stationer, Whiting, sold the Harris people their office supplies. So I dropped into Whiting's one day and told him that I wanted the next check he received from Harris.

"'I'll give you cash for it,' I explained.

"A few days later I dropped in and got it. It was for fifteen dollars in payment for some envelopes and type-writer ribbons. Whiting indorsed it and I gave him fifteen dollars in cash.

"Then I got busy on that check. Naturally, from my years in the check-protection business, I've become quite an expert in doing all kinds of fancy stunts with checks. I've quite a laboratory of chemicals. I worked on that check for two days. By the time I got through, I'd altered it so that the treasurer himself would swear that he'd signed it. I raised it to one hundred and fifty dollars. Then we put it through our bank. I kept track of it and found that Harris's bank honored it. Next day I called on old Harris.

"'Well, I'm ready to pay back that debt,' I announced and slapped one hundred and thirty-five dollars down on Harris's desk. 'It came in handy over Sunday.'

"The old man was dumfounded. Then I explained it. Was he impressed? Nothing would do but that we must rush right down to his bank and inspect my handiwork. Secretly he was delighted at the opportunity to josh the bank officers.

"'Well, Stewart, you've given me an object-lesson,' he remarked, when we got back to his office.

"'And remember,' I interrupted, 'I could have raised that fifteen dollars to fifteen thousand dollars just as easily.'

"'We'll want one of your protectors for every cashier in

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

our organization,' he added. 'My purchasing agent will send you the order to-morrow.'"

"Many Salesmen Talk Too Much," says this Successful One

"It seems a strange thing to say about a line of work in which one earns his living by talking," said a crack salesman, recently, "but the fact remains that most salesmen talk too much. A really good salesman must know how to listen as well as how to talk. By listening he learns the proper point of appeal with the particular prospect he's handling. Only the other day I saw an easy sale thrown away by a loquacious salesman.

"I was waiting in the office of a big collection agency to interview one of the two members of the firm regarding a high-price set of books.

"A fat, pompous-looking individual, aged perhaps forty-five, entered and asked for Mr. Tyler, the other partner. Tyler emerged from his private office and, asking the caller to be seated, prepared to listen to his story.

"'I am local representative for the St. Louis Law School, Mr. Tyler,' wheezed the visitor, 'and I have called to explain the advantages of our correspondence course. Our sales manager forwarded your request for information in answer to one of our ads.'

"'Yes, I'm interested in the subject,' admitted Tyler, a well-groomed, keen young fellow who in five years' time had built his business from nothing to a point where his share of the profits came to eight thousand dollars annually. "I've an idea that a legal training would save me money in my business.'

"'Not only that, Mr. Tyler,' continued the salesman, 'but think of the position a lawyer holds in the community,

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

think of the social advantages accruing from the possession of a thorough legal education, think of the broad culture, the enhanced intellectual vistas gained by a study of this great profession of jurisprudence; think of the added power of self-expression which results from a course in this subject. Ah, Mr. Tyler, the law is indeed a profession to which any man of high ambition may well aspire. The law, Mr. Tyler, has prepared most of our Presidents for the weighty and responsible duties of their exalted position; the legal profession, Mr. Tyler, numbers among its members some of the greatest figures in world politics the earth has ever witnessed,' and so on *ad nauseam* droned this oratorical genius.

"Tyler suffered in silence for about twenty minutes, then glanced at his watch, pleaded an important engagement, and abruptly bowed the bore out.

"An hour or so later I was introduced to Tyler by his partner.

"'Oh yes, you were in the outer office when that fat fellow was delivering his Fourth of July oration,' he remarked, with a laugh. 'He's what I call a false alarm. I gave him his cue and he didn't have sense enough to take it. The law interests me from one viewpoint only: will a knowledge of it save me money right here in this business. I'm not particularly impressed with the dignity of a lawyer's position. I have lawyers working for me for twenty-five dollars a week. Neither have I presidential aspirations. For twenty minutes that fellow droned along, emphasizing features which didn't interest me in the slightest degree. His line of talk might impress a callow youth; it missed fire with me.'

"That's only one example," concluded the salesman. "Thousands of sales are lost daily through not sensing the

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

vital point of contact. Listen until you've learned that, then talk to your heart's content; that's my policy."

How a 25-cent Investment Paid this Salesman an Annual Dividend of \$1,000

"As every salesman knows, the chances for securing an interview are greatly lessened if one carries his sales material in plain sight," remarked a successful magazine-subscription solicitor.

"And in my case, for some subtle but very potent reason, my own self-confidence suffers greatly if in jockeying for an interview I am laden with literature which I cannot conceal.

"In my work I have to carry a copy of the magazine I represent, measuring six and three-quarters by nine and one-half inches, a folding device, which, when spread out, shows the backs of the set of books we give as a premium, a pamphlet of testimonials, and a supply of order-blanks. Now, of course, no ordinary pocket will accommodate this assortment. For months I was forced to carry most of my literature where it was subject to the eagle-eyed scrutiny of the man at the gate. In perhaps one case out of three it resulted in my being denied an interview. And every salesman knows the demoralizing effect of a succession of these experiences. It unfits one for successfully delivering his canvass in the cases where he *does* break into the private office.

"Finally, an idea occurred to me. I dropped into a tailor's one day—showed him my collection of paraphernalia, and inquired if it were practicable to construct a hidden pocket to contain it. The job was completed within fifteen minutes. It cost twenty-five cents. The pocket consisted merely of a bag attached to the waistband of my trousers, where it was concealed by the skirt of my coat. *This pocket has increased my weekly commissions an average of twenty dollars.* It reacts favorably in three ways: (a)

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

as no one suspects my errand, my self-confidence is increased; (b) I obtain two or three times more interviews than previously; and (c) my prospect does not promptly assume a defensive attitude.

“And it is certainly amusing to witness the prospect’s amazement as I calmly produce my voluminous mass of literature from its place of concealment. Generally it raises a laugh, and that’s a great asset in breaking the ice.”

This Man’s Overhead Expense Consists Only of the Price of His Hat

“Often, as I observe the clerks standing behind the counters in various stores, I wonder why they remain in such a confining occupation at such low wages,” said a young man who earns a comfortable livelihood in an independent pursuit. “It’s merely that they fail to recognize the opportunities with which they’re surrounded.

“Take my case, for instance. I was working in a stationery-and-office-supply store for fifteen dollars a week. I knew the percentage of profit we made on our goods and I realized that, although many of the articles we handled were marked up 100 per cent., the overhead expense connected with a store reduced that profit to but a fair margin.

“Finally I established contact with a manufacturer. Resigning my position, I started out to canvass the office-buildings. I am not a particularly convincing salesman. But almost any one can sell silver dollars for seventy-five cents. And that was my proposition.

“I sell two seventy-five-cent typewriter ribbons for one dollar. By buying several gross at a time, this figure shows me a very comfortable profit. And, naturally, I make a sale in almost every office at which I call. I have no office; I pay no rent; I have no bookkeeping expense; no bad bills.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

Hence my tactical advantage over the retailer. Also I sell carbon paper at a similar reduction. My net earnings average over thirty dollars a week, and as my clientele becomes established this will increase.

“But there are a thousand and one similar opportunities fairly bidding for one’s attention. An acquaintance of mine, for example, makes a very good thing out of envelopes. He takes orders for future delivery and obtains his product from a big mill in West Virginia, where the envelopes are printed in the same operation with which they are manufactured.

“He can undersell the stores for the same reasons which apply in my case. The retailer must add a big percentage to meet his overhead and salaries. The small man is spared all that expense.

“Another friend of mine noticed that the cheapest copyholder on the local market sold at one dollar and a half. It was a rather elaborate affair of metal. Its high price restricted its sale. Typists think twice before spending one dollar and a half.

“With a jack-knife, he whittled one out of wood which was exactly as serviceable, and contracted with a small woodworking plant for its manufacture.

“They cost him about seven cents apiece; he sells them at fifty cents. As he places about twenty a day, his weekly income is a shade over fifty dollars.

“Still another friend of mine makes a good thing out of selling maps from office to office.

“Just glance over the stock of almost any retail store and you’ll see scores of articles which you can buy almost, if not quite, as cheaply as the proprietor. Figure that he operates on a 40-per-cent. mark-up, then estimate how many you could sell in a day at a 25-per-cent. profit. You’ll be amazed to see the vast field which lies before you.

“Many commodities which have never been sold other than from a dealer’s shelves are splendidly adapted to

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

straight canvassing. I don't claim that a man can ever grow rich in this line. His earning power is restricted by his time. But it offers a splendid opening for the fifteen-dollar or twenty-dollar-a-week man who wants to increase his earning power from ten dollars to fifteen dollars a week.

"Specialize on two or three staple articles as I have, and you'll be surprised how easily sales are made. A silver dollar for seventy-five cents tempts the most obdurate customer to buy."

**"A Little Tact is Worth a Lot of Aggressive Force,"
says this Salesman**

"It was in an art-store on Fifth Avenue the other day that I received a tip regarding salesmanship that was valuable," remarked a salesman, recently.

'I was admiring an exhibit of modern American—Lie, Dougherty, Scofield, etc.—when a corpulent lady from South Bend entered.

"'Charming indeed!' she gushed to the salesman, as she viewed the exhibit through her lorgnette, 'but haven't you some Meissonier? I'm a collector of his work. Have some dozen or so examples in my gallery at home.'

"'Really!' replied the salesman, suavely. 'Are his pictures not beautiful? Some day I'm sure there'll be a revulsion of sentiment in his favor. Merely that he is so harshly criticized nowadays fails to affect *my* opinion. I'm sorry we haven't any. We specialize on the contemporary men—men whose work is sure to increase in value. You note the difference in treatment: the broader, sketchier handling; more light; more vigor.' And so on *ad infinitum*. Sufficiently subtly and tactfully he managed to tell that woman that Meissonier and his school were as dead as a dodo and that he, for his part, quite agreed with her in lamenting

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

the fact, but—what would you? A new generation was here and the new men had much to recommend them. She bought two canvases totaling four thousand dollars. But not once was there stated or implied any criticism of the purchaser's former mania.

“‘Meissonier!’ snorted the salesman, after his customer's departure. ‘Fussy, finicky, Christy of oil-painting. Fit to paint pictures for soap calendars and that's about all.’

“But I found food for thought in the episode. I began to see why I fell down on a good many of *my* sales.

“In pushing my own line I was inclined to knock my competitors'; often justly. But in doing this I was criticizing the customer's judgment. And that often lost a sale.

“Next day I began to apply the lesson of the art-store. Instead of delivering a wholesale condemnation of the goods already on the dealer's shelves, I conceded some merit to them. Then I pointed out the even greater merit of the product I handled. This policy did not, as I had feared, seem to weaken the force of my canvass. I found most of my prospects inclined to be amenable to reason. Now my method of attack is considerably different than before the episode narrated. I have substituted tact for bulldog aggression. And, as a result, my sales are increasing.”

Testimonials Help this Agent's Sales

“I sell a device which, when placed upon the burner of a gas-stove, diverts the heat to the three orifices of the attachment, thus, in effect, adding just so many burners to the stove,” remarked a house-to-house canvasser.

“Although it would seem that this merely divided the heat into three parts, as a matter of fact, gas is conserved

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

for two reasons: first, because there is less heat deflected from the bottom of the pot or kettle into the air, this because it strikes with less impact; second, because the device itself, after it becomes heated, tends to retain the temperature.

“For months I sold these attachments to housewives at two dollars apiece before the value of testimonials occurred to me. I devoted several days to going back over my trail, soliciting written indorsements.

“Realizing that the originals would soon become tattered and frayed if carried in my pocket, I had zinc-cut facsimiles made and reproductions printed. These I had bound into a little booklet which I use in my canvass.

“The first week I operated, supported by my testimonials, my sales increased 30 per cent. As gradually I secured those of women of still greater prominence, the increase became even more marked.”

Selling a House vs. Selling a Prospect

“There are two diametrically opposite methods of selling,” remarked a high-priced sales manager. “One is the old style and the other is the new. The first is relatively ineffective; the second is 100 per cent. efficient. And the difference is merely one of attitude. The old-school salesman thinks and talks only about his commodity—the up-to-date man thinks and talks about his prospect and the latter’s needs.

“People purchase for a motive; not because of the article, but because of a need, real or fancied, for that article.

“Only a few days ago I saw the difference exemplified by two realty salesmen. I was looking for a house, either to buy or rent, and went out to a pretty suburb to inspect its

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

offerings. A salesman greeted me and my better half, hustled us into a machine, and began showing his line. In each house he spared no pains to display its advantages. He pointed out the fine points of construction, the spacious rooms, the handsome parquetry floors, the convenience to the station, anything and everything that would make the property seem desirable. He delivered a really eloquent canvass. But it was all based on the property. His argument was not specifically applied to me or my family's needs. It was a sort of stock canvass. We thanked him for his trouble and came back to the city.

"Next day we went out to another suburb. We entered the tract office and approached a salesman. He engaged us in conversation for perhaps twenty minutes before offering to display anything. In that period of time he learned my business address, the size of my family, whether or not I ever had relatives or friends visiting me, whether or not I had any children, what time I got in to my office in the morning, what my hobbies were in the way of recreation both summer and winter, whether I was interested primarily in buying for an investment, in case I *did* buy, or in a home; what were my wife's social interests, and so on.

"Then we began to inspect houses. Like the former salesman, he spared no pains in displaying the advantages of each house, but in addition to that he utilized every item of information he had previously gleaned about our personal needs. He named the train which I'd have to catch to reach my office at nine o'clock, and what car line I'd connect with; he spoke of the proximity to a golf-course; he indicated the convenience of the guest-room for visitors; he spoke of the accessibility of the school for my children. In a word, he made a direct, personal application of the property in question to the specific needs and desires of me and my family.

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

He was constantly searching for and sounding individual motives which would cause me to purchase. He was thinking more of me and my motives than he was of the property. Two days later I bought. Do you see the point?

"The first man was trying to sell a house; the second was trying to sell a house to me. And he did it. That's efficiency in salesmanship."

An Inexpensive Premium Doubles the Sales of 2,000 Agents

"Mr. Sarver, I'm about ready to quit," said Ellis, as he walked into the office of the Foley Brush Company's district manager late one afternoon.

"It may be possible to earn a living selling brushes from house to house, but I'm not man enough to make it go. I've been bucking it for nearly a month and my commissions average only about eleven dollars weekly." And Ellis dropped his suit-case of samples on the floor and sank wearily into a chair.

"It's no cinch, I'll admit that," said Sarver, "but stay with it another week. The main office is about to inaugurate a new sales plan and I believe it will help you fellows out on the firing-line a great deal. You see this?" The manager produced a little brush from a pigeonhole of his desk.

"Here's a little vegetable brush which retails at fifteen cents," he resumed. "Several cases are down at the freight-house right now. You say that your chief obstacle is to obtain an interview with the housewife. This little brush should prove an open sesame. Beginning next week we shall select a list of from fifteen to thirty names daily from the blue book or directory for each salesman, and mail to each address this post-card."

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

Sarver handed Ellis a post-card bearing the following text:

THE FOLEY BRUSH COMPANY

ROCHESTER, N. Y.

ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT

This certificate entitles

Mrs....., of,
to one complimentary "Sanitary" Woven Wire Brush to be
presented by

Mr., of,
Advertising Agent. This certificate must be given our representa-
tive when brush is presented.

In receiving this article you are not required to purchase any
goods whatsoever and you are not under obligation to any one on
account of having received the brush free of charge.

FOLEY BRUSH COMPANY.

Advertising Department.

"These cards will be timed to arrive in the morning mail. A few hours later the salesman will call, and should find little difficulty in obtaining an interview. The housewife will be flattered at the attention; few will refuse to inspect the balance of your line. The rest is up to you. This device means that you will get more interviews, and, what is more important, interviews in which the prospect is predisposed in your favor. The house assumes all the additional expense, which, truth to tell, is very slight."

"That sounds mighty good to me," admitted Ellis. "I'll certainly stick around to see how it works. Why, man, it ought to make a world of difference, having the ice broken that way."

And it did. Ellis's commissions during the first week of the new régime exceeded twenty dollars. To-day the Foley

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

Brush Company lends this aid to each of its two thousand field agents. The sales manager reports an average increase of 100 per cent. in individual sales as a result of the simple device.

“Know Your Man,” says this Life-insurance Solicitor

“In the life-insurance business, more than in any other line of selling,” remarked a successful agent, “knowledge of the exact circumstances and mental attitude of the prospect is necessary to close the sale.

“By plunging ahead blindly one often makes ludicrous errors.” The speaker laughed.

“For example, one day I dropped into the office of Miller, a business man in this city. As you will perceive, I knew nothing about his personal affairs.

“Upon his admission that he was married and carried hardly any insurance, I proceeded to open up on the good, old emotional ‘Mary and the baby’ argument. I left the baby part out, however, as he had no children.

“I painted a heartrending picture of the horror of the position of a destitute widow; insinuated that had he a spark of manhood in his breast he would not overlook this opportunity to secure his wife’s future protection; in short, I talked to him like a Dutch uncle with the tremolo stop doing full duty.

“I failed to make the slightest impression. Never have I tackled a more obdurate prospect. And yet I had sized up this particular man as more likely to respond to an appeal of this sort than to the cold dollars-and-cents argument. Finally, I walked out, defeated. ‘Next time I’ll tackle him from a different angle,’ was my conclusion.

“A few weeks later I chanced to mention to a friend that I had talked to Miller regarding insurance.

“‘Miller,’ he repeated. ‘Shouldn’t think you’d have

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

gotten far with him. It's a cinch that he wouldn't insure in his wife's favor. He's divorcing her on such and such grounds. Suit was filed but a day or two ago.'

"That explains a good deal,' was my reply. And, to his evident amusement, I related my experience with Miller.

"A few months later I did land Miller. But it was for an endowment policy in which sentiment didn't enter in the slightest degree. I can never recall the circumstances of that first interview, however, without a smile. Never was a man 'in worse.' Nowadays I don't operate blindly. I always know something about a man before tackling him."

A Novel Argument Resulted in a \$100,000 Insurance Policy

"Bill Esterbrook, of the Excelsior Fire Insurance Company, had the reputation of being one of the easiest men in the city to approach and one of the hardest to sell," said Hadfield, the life-insurance man.

"He was one of those genial chaps armed with a bantering manner which was well-nigh impervious. Esterbrook would be serious enough when trying to sell his own product, but he'd kid the life out of any one who tried to sell *him* anything.

"At the time I got on Esterbrook's trail he was a bachelor of about forty-five; was right in the midst of his promotion of the Excelsior Company, of which he is now president, and didn't carry a red cent of insurance.

"I'd canvassed Esterbrook several times when I concluded that I'd have to evolve a novel attack. He was invulnerable against the usual arguments.

"I haven't a soul in the world whom I'd name as beneficiary,' he'd assert, 'and as to the endowment feature, I can make my savings earn a good deal more money than you people can offer me.'

"But look here,' I demanded. 'You've corralled over

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

one hundred thousand dollars' worth of the people's money to start this fire-insurance company. You'll need three or four times as much before you can begin operations. You pay your stock salesmen 15 per cent. Suppose you were killed by an auto to-morrow. Where would your stockholders get off? There is no one who could successfully complete the promotion of this company. It's a one-man proposition if ever I saw one. The money invested would be paid back, you say. It couldn't *all* be paid back. Probably 20 per cent. of it has gone for promotion expense. You'd better take out fifty thousand dollars, naming the Excelsior Company as beneficiary.'

"'Hadfield, you're a wonder at propounding ingenious reasons for taking out insurance,' was Esterbrook's laughing reply. 'Come in here and sell stock for me. I'll give you a steady job in the office when we get under way.'

"And that's as far as I could get. But I felt that I was on the right track. My next move was to interview Mitchell, of the Mitchell Advertising Agency. He was in charge of the Excelsior's publicity campaign.

"'Wouldn't it be a great advertising feature,' I inquired, to have Esterbrook insure his life for fifty thousand dollars to protect the Excelsior's stockholders?'

"'Fifty thousand dollars?' exclaimed Mitchell. 'Make it one hundred thousand dollars! I'll devote a quarter-page ad. to it in all the local papers and embody it in our booklet and follow-up literature. That's a new one, Hadfield. I'll boost for you. Let's get some of the present stockholders to urge him to do it.' And Mitchell supplied me with the names and addresses of several heavy stockholders.

"A few days later I called on Esterbrook again. Mitchell was with me.

"'Well, Hadfield, you put it over, all right,' admitted Esterbrook. 'I told you that you were a wonder. You've

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

subverted my publicity man and several of my stockholders to your nefarious schemes. Make an appointment for me to see your doctor and I'll go through with it.' And he signed his name to an application for one hundred thousand dollars.

"'It's all foolishness,' he protested. 'I'm good for forty years. But Mitchell, here, claims that it's a good investment from an advertising viewpoint. And a lot of my stockholders will lie awake nights until that application is O. K.'d. But I'll hand it to you, Hadfield. For twenty-five years I've prided myself on resisting the assaults of you spellbinders. And now you back me into a corner and hold me up for one hundred thousand dollars' worth. I guess the drinks are on me, all right.'"

A Friend at Court Helps this Insurance Man

"Strange as it may sound," said a life-insurance solicitor, recently, "I've had more partially warmed-up prospects spoiled by the wives' objections than by any other source. Time and again, I've had a man interested, only to have him escape at the last moment because his better half queered the deal when it came to drawing the money from the bank. As it was obviously to wives' advantage to have their husbands insured in their favor, I could not understand their attitude.

"After losing three successive prospects from this cause, I concluded to forestall further incidents of this sort. I abandoned my office-to-office campaign and started in house-to-house operations. Of course, I found that the husband was down-town. Thereupon I would explain my proposition to the wife. Realizing the average woman's ignorance of insurance, I took pains to cover in the simplest language every point involved. Almost invariably I succeeded in enlisting her as my ally.

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

“‘I’ll call again this evening,’ I’d remark upon leaving, ‘and discuss the matter further with both you and your husband.’

“Upon making my second call, I found the ground broken for my efforts. Backed by the wife’s support, I found little difficulty in closing the husband. Often he would take out insurance to avoid a family argument. With his wife urging him to this course, it was difficult to combat my arguments without seeming to lack consideration for her interests. Since following this plan, my earnings have substantially increased.”

The Salesman Who Never Guessed Wrong

As a successful salesman of a high-priced calculating-machine, Marshall prided himself upon his knowledge of human nature. It was a favorite theory of his that he could tell a man’s profession and position at one glance.

“We’re all types,” he was fond of declaiming at the regular Saturday afternoon gatherings of the sales force. “When you’ve had sufficient experience, you’ve got ‘em all sized up and docketed. I can tell a doctor at a look; the lawyer is another well-defined type. As for the real-estate or insurance men, who are interchangeable, there again is a strongly marked type. Traveling men are recognizable as such a block away. The bookkeeper, too; there’s another case where I never go wrong.

“Mighty few men over thirty ever fool me. I don’t know whether it’s the job that makes the man or whether certain jobs inevitably attract certain types. I can generally spot ‘em; that’s a cinch. Furthermore, I can always tell the big men from the men of medium caliber; and the latter from the twenty-dollar-a-week piker. We all look the part we’re cast for. But you’ve got to have an observing eye

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

to note it. I never make a mistake. A salesman can't afford to."

It was shortly after twelve one day when Marshall entered a department store which was reputed to do nine million dollars' worth of business annually, for the purpose of interesting the management in his machine. The salesman had heard that the proprietor, B. L. Thompson, was a difficult man to see.

As the elevator reached the fourth floor, on which was located the café, he realized that he was hungry and concluded to postpone his attack until fortified by a meal. He sat down at an empty table and placed his order.

A few moments later a shabbily dressed, elderly man entered the room, looked about him helplessly, and, seeing a chair vacant opposite Marshall, shuffled over and sat down.

The vigorous young salesman studied his vis-à-vis in tolerant contempt. The contrast was marked. Marshall wore a seventy-dollar suit, a two-dollar-and-a-half tie; a ten-dollar pair of shoes. He was spruce, well groomed, well set up. His neighbor's twenty-dollar suit looked as though it had been slept in for a week. He wore a once-white waistcoat of ancient vintage; his collar was of a type popular in Daniel Webster's time; his tie of black silk was lank and stringy. His graying hair was long and unkempt; his shoulders were rounded; his chest sunken.

"Poor devil!" thought Marshall. "I've got his number—an assistant bookkeeper in the auditing department. Worked all his life for eighteen dollars a week, and thankful to get it. One of those mild types, lacking in force and self-reliance—born to be a failure. Well, some one has to hold the little jobs," he reflected, philosophically. "We can't all make good."

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

"Fine day," volunteered the old bookkeeper, hesitatingly.

"Yes," agreed Marshall, "cool and seasonable. Good for business." And the salesman, who was always glad of an appreciative audience, went on to air his views on the effect of weather on business conditions. From that he switched to department-store management, a subject upon which he felt himself well posted.

"The department stores have got to take a brace," he announced, "or they'll go to the wall. See how the specialty-stores are beating them to it. Too much waste and non-productive labor in the big organizations. Take this store, for instance. I'll bet an efficiency expert could step in here and save 'em one hundred thousand dollars a year. The productive branch of our industrial life has been thoroughly overhauled since Taylor first propounded his views. But our distributing system is hopelessly conservative. The department-store proprietors seem to be asleep at the switch. They know merchandise, but they don't know methods. Take your department, for instance. You're a bookkeeper, aren't you?"

The old man seemed taken aback.

"Why, er—yes, in a way," he tittered, hesitatingly.

"Thought so," said Marshall. "I never make a mistake. Well, take your department. I'll bet it could be operated with 20 per cent. fewer employees. Still, perhaps it's just as well. These up-to-date efficiency men cut labor costs tremendously, but it's kind of tough on the men who are fired."

Marshall held forth for some time, the old man listening in respectful silence as befitted an eighteen-dollar-a-week clerk in the presence of a one hundred-dollar-a-week salesman. Finally the salesman paid his check, and left his companion sipping a cup of cambric tea.

On the office floor, he sought out Mr. Thompson's private

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

office, and was informed by the stenographer that the proprietor was somewhere about the store.

"Wait a few moments and he'll return," she announced. "Then you can send in your name for a later appointment. Mr. Thompson is a very busy man and will probably refer you to the auditor.

"Here he is now," she explained; but Marshall had faded into the background by way of the exit. For into the office came shuffling his luncheon companion, B. L. Thompson.

A Side-show Employee Gave this Salesman an Idea

"It was from a talk that I had with the capper for a side-show at a beach resort that I got an idea which has increased my earnings over 100 per cent.," said a salesman.

"This young fellow, who acted as spieler, was certainly clever, and as my own line of work, addressing audiences of salesmen and office employees in the interests of a correspondence school, was to a certain extent similar, I watched his technique with great interest. There was just enough humor in his spiel to get the crowd with him, but as he pushed for a close at the wind-up he was all business.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," he concluded, "I have sought to describe for you the manifold and resplendent wonders which have been gathered from the most distant portions of the civilized and uncivilized world for your delectation and amusement; but words fail me to do the subject justice. To appreciate this galaxy of freaks, marvels, and amusing phenomena, you positively must see the big show on the inside. Now is your opportunity. Probably not in a generation will such a chance be offered you. Ten cents admits to everything. Giles, the human volcano, who eats fire and swallows swords; Lena, the tattooed lady, a veritable human picture-gallery; Abdul Maha, the Oriental

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

sage and mystic, who foretells the future with incredible accuracy; Dandy and Dick, the world-famous pygmies, who have appeared before kings, emperors, pashas, and potentates; Rigo, the dislocationist, the puzzle and problem of the most eminent surgeons and scientists of the day; Fannie, the fat lady, a stupendous mountain of flesh, who weighs six hundred and eighty-two pounds; and, last but not least, the far-famed bearded lady, that wonderful woman first discovered and displayed to a wondering populace by the late P. T. Barnum. Ten cents—one dime—admits to all, ladies and gentlemen! See everything and stay as long as you please. Get your tickets on either side of the entrance.'

"The crowd surged forward, and I found myself inspecting the galaxy of freaks and phenomena, who fell upon one with the desperate determination to extract as many dimes as possible before one succeeded in making his escape.

"Later I fell into conversation with a young fellow who stood talking to the human picture-gallery.

"'Well, I must sneak around front again,' he suddenly exclaimed, glancing at his watch. 'I'm one of the cappers, you see. I have to start the crowd off at the end of the barker's spiel by walking up and buying a ticket.'

"'Cappers,' I reflected as I boarded the car for home. 'Why not use them in my business?'

"My method of procedure is as follows. After convincing the proprietor, or general manager, of a concern of the merit of my institution, I secure permission to address the office and sales force at a meeting held just after business hours. The crucial moment with me is just after I deliver my peroration and produce my contract blanks. My audi-

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

ence is convinced of the benefits to be derived from the course, but hesitates to incur obligations totaling over fifty dollars. More than once I have had to start the fight all over again after delivering my speech.

"The next day I had an appointment to address the employees of a local jobbing-house. To the manager I revealed my idea regarding the use of a capper, and although at first he demurred on ethical grounds, as he was anxious to have his force sign up, he agreed to the suggestions. A young clerk was called in and the situation explained to him. He readily agreed to enact the rôle.

"As he was from a department to which my course did not apply, I was not thereby losing a possible customer.

"As I had anticipated, the plan proved effective. My capper stepped forward as I concluded, and that started the ball a-rolling. Most of us are sheep, and the suggestive force of his action crystallized the half-formed decisions of the rest of my listeners. Since then I have used the plan with good effect in many instances. I estimate that it has more than doubled my earnings."

One Man's Secret in Selling Insurance

"How do I sell so much insurance with apparently so little effort?" said an insurance man in response to the interviewer's question. "Well, if I should tell you, you might print it in a newspaper, and then I'd be up against more competition," he added, with a laugh.

"But I'll say this much. Did you ever stop to think how much insurance business originated in banks? How many times a day does the watch-dog of the treasury say, 'Now, the merchandise which secures this loan must be thoroughly protected by insurance, Mr. Jones.' Lots of fire insurance emanates from such interviews.

SELLING THE CONSUMER DIRECT

“Then bank directors have been known to insist upon a borrower’s taking out life insurance to protect his loan. In the majority of loans, it’s man, not matter, which is the real security. To insist upon a man’s insuring his life is in some ways rather a compliment.

“I write both fire and life insurance, and I write a good deal of both. My business comes from many sources. Perhaps you now suspect one very profitable one.”

III

SELLING THE RETAIL TRADE

Following Through a Sale

“One point which I’m always trying to impress upon our salesmen,” said a sales manager, “is that they should devote as much thought to getting our goods off the dealers’ shelves as to getting them on.

“There is more money in selling ten dealers one hundred dollars’ worth of our goods a year than in selling twenty dealers fifty dollars’ worth.

“Aside from demonstrations and similar efforts, the two strongest factors in pushing merchandise out of a store are clerks’ support and good displays. Only recently I read in a speech delivered by a candy manufacturer an account of what, in his case, was accomplished by good displays.

“He said that his experience had shown that an exhibit of advertising and display material upon the shelves with the goods stimulated sales but from 2 to 5 per cent.; a display in the window with other goods boosted the demand from 25 to 50 per cent., and a counter showing resulted in an increase of from 50 to 150 per cent.

“My own experience supports these findings. Now, although the advertising department can evolve clever ideas for windows and counters, it’s up to the salesman to see that they’re applied. Too many salesmen think that their work is over when they turn in the order. Many of them seem to

SELLING THE RETAIL TRADE

feel that more credit is attached to adding new customers than to stimulating more sales from old customers.

“As a matter of fact, the reverse is the case. It is much easier to sell a dealer who has never bought your product than to sell one who has purchased once and who concludes that your goods are stickers, and refuses to reorder. As a rule, when a product moves slowly it is because it is not properly pushed.

“By staging salesmen’s prize contests for greater volume of sales per dealer, we focus the attention of our men upon this vital point.”

Capturing Dealers’ Clerks

“To be solid with a customer is good,” said a particularly successful salesman, recently, “but if your customer is a dealer, to be solid with his clerks is even better. For, in a store of any size, it is the clerks who are in direct contact with the public; it is the clerks who guide the buying impulse of the uncertain purchaser. And, very often, it is a clerk who selects the articles for and trims the windows. Then, too, as a business grows, the proprietor is likely to delegate a good deal of his buying to some one of his clerks.

“I make it a rule to become well acquainted with my customers’ clerks. And I see that they’re thoroughly posted on the talking-points of the goods I handle. So vitally important do I consider this that I have at various times induced our sales manager to stage prize contests with a view to concentrating the attention of our customers’ clerks upon our product.

“In our main office we now have a mailing-list comprising the names of thousands of clerks employed in stores where our goods are sold. In my opinion, this list is only

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

second in value to our list of customers. One of our clerks' contests involved the naming of all the possible talking-points of the goods we market; on another occasion, prizes were offered for the most unique reason ever advanced by a purchaser as the cause of his buying.

"These contests accomplish three objects. They educate the clerks regarding our goods; they create good-will among them, and they are of practical value in uncovering new sales points for the advertising department.

"Don't overlook the clerks; that's my advice to a salesman who covers the retail trade. They can make or break any concern. See that they're on your side."

Selling in the Face of Cut-price Competition

"I handle an article which is much higher in price than any other in the field," remarked a salesman, "and, naturally, it is of far higher quality. As a matter of fact, and as is generally the case with high-priced commodities, it represents a far better investment than its low-priced rivals.

"Many of our younger salesmen, however, claim that our product is difficult to sell in the face of cut-price competition. It is a favorite excuse for lost sales. Only the other day at our weekly salesmen's conference this alibi was offered:

"Look here," said I, addressing the offender, "do you claim to be a salesman? You're talking like an order-taker. Let me tell you how I met that price objection only yesterday. A buyer told me that he liked our product all right, but that the price was an obstacle.

"If I can buy something that will fill the bill for half the money," he said, "why pay your price?"

"Mr. Jones," I replied, "I'll wager that you pay at least one hundred dollars a month for house rent. I can find

SELLING THE RETAIL TRADE

you a place which is big enough to hold you and your family and you'll have to pay but forty dollars a month. But you don't care to live in that sort of neighborhood, you reply. Your present location is required to sustain your credit. Furthermore, it means social connections which result in business profits. In other words, despite the fact that you're paying more than twice as much for rent as is absolutely necessary, you feel that you're getting good value for your money, that it's a good investment, and that you don't care to move. Very good. The same applies to my product.

“““It costs 30 per cent. more than any competing article, but it's 100 per cent. superior. In other words, it's a better investment. The upkeep cost is much lower than that of a cheaper article, and it will, therefore, save you money in the long run. Just as it's worth that extra sixty dollars a month to you, Mr. Jones, to live where you do, so it's worth that extra 30 per cent. to have my product in your store. Won't you just put your John Henry on this dotted line, Mr. Jones?” I concluded. And he did so.””

Getting a Grip on Grocers

“I am not what you would call a born salesman,” said one of the city staff of a wholesale grocery-house, “and yet it is true that I outsell many men who are far better equipped by nature. The reason for my success is really very simple. I had not been selling the local grocers long before I began to see that if I would look just a little further than most salesmen and seek to insure the dealer's resale of my goods, rather than to consider my work accomplished when I got the commodities placed upon his shelves, I would increase my business.

“I began to make a real study of the retailer's problems,

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

and through wide reading of trade media was soon posted on many tried and tested trade-stimulating plans. At first my customers betrayed little faith in my suggestions. They felt that ideas emanating from a mere salesman who had never owned a store were probably of little value. Before long, however, they began to experiment with my schemes. As they succeeded, faith in my advice increased. It was not long before it began to be noised about that I had information under my hat which was worth investigating. As a consequence, I found the local grocers seldom too busy to grant me a hearing.

“From this it was a natural step to a study of retailing problems in general. I gradually acquired a pretty comprehensive grasp of the most approved methods of modern merchandising. I induced my customers to install better systems, to speed up their turnover, to inaugurate accounting safeguards against theft and careless waste, to ascertain their costs and their turnover by lines; to route their deliveries more intelligently; in short, they began to look upon me as a sort of guide, philosopher, and friend. It was not long before I was asked to speak before a meeting of the local grocers’ association. This served to greatly increase my prestige. ‘Now, then, what did all this have to do with selling groceries?’ you may wonder.

“My order-book demonstrated that it had a great deal to do with it. It was but natural to place orders with a man to whom you were, in some degree, indebted for your prosperity. And, furthermore, as the value of my advice became evident, for motives of self-interest, if for no other reason, it was wise to give me a good share of one’s business.

“This plan of mine will not reap results at once. It requires considerable time before the fruits become evident. But for a salesman who is permanently located in a territory

SELLING THE RETAIL TRADE

it pays to sell service along with his goods. This applies to more than the grocery business."

How a Knowledge of Human Nature Helped this Salesman

"It's not the article you have to sell, its price, nor its quality which makes sales," said a successful salesman, recently. "It's knowledge of human nature.

"For instance, the average merchant, particularly in the smaller towns, spends as much time worrying about his competitor's progress as he does about running his own business. And a knowledge of this fact has proved very valuable to me in closing obdurate prospects.

"Some years ago I was out on my first trip. I was handling a thoroughly reliable line of goods, but failed miserably in my attempts to make sales. One morning, after about a week of discouragement, I found myself in a town of about twenty-five thousand inhabitants. Two comparatively large stores, Grant's and Reedly's, were battling for local supremacy. I knew this from my talk with salesmen en route.

"I casually sauntered into Grant's office, introduced myself, and sat down.

"Just dropped in to say 'hello,' 'Mr. Grant,' I said, offering him a cigar. 'Your friend Reedly's the man I'm after, but he's busy just now.' And I started discussing general business conditions. But the old man seemed abstracted. I'd noticed him prick up his ears at my mention of his chief rival.

"Finally he remarked: 'What is it you're handling, anyway?'

"Why, it's the Blank line of petticoats,' I replied. 'But as we appoint only one agent in a city and as my people have already got in touch with Reedly, you wouldn't be interested in seeing them.' Literally we were 'in touch'

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

with Reedly, but no more so than with Grant. A circular campaign had covered the entire trade.

“‘Hum!’ grunted the old man. ‘Closed with him, have you?’

“‘Why, no, not yet,’ I confessed. ‘That’s what I’m here for to-day.’

“‘Let’s see them, anyway,’ urged Grant, and, putting on his hat, insisted upon my taking him over to the hotel to see the samples.

“I made not the slightest effort to sell him. Merely mentioned the fact that we were planning on supporting Reedly with local newspaper advertising, etc. Thereupon Grant actually asked me for the agency. I appeared reluctant, said I felt I wasn’t treating Reedly fairly, but finally consented. As he wrote his signature to the contract the old man chuckled aloud with delight at the thought of having overreached his rival.

“It was a lesson to me. I had no more trouble in placing the Blank line. An ounce of strategy is worth a pound of eloquence. And the salesman to succeed must be as wily as Machiavelli.”

“ Keeping Everlastingly At It,” Explains this Salesman’s Success

“Yes, they call me the star salesman of this organization,” admitted a modest-appearing man of middle age, who had been selling the products of the Downer-Crawford Paper Co. for some years.

“As a matter of fact, there are several abler salesmen on our force. The reason my total volume tops the list is merely because I see the greatest number of customers in the course of a week. Selling merchandise of this character, where the average order doesn’t exceed ten or fifteen dollars,

SELLING THE RETAIL TRADE

is a good deal like laying brick—the more hours you work, the more orders you'll take.

“Most city salesmen who sell to the retail meat and grocery trades have convinced themselves that it is impossible to sell goods Saturday afternoon.

“‘I'll just spoil prospects,’ is their attitude. ‘My customers are too busy to listen to me.’ And at about two o'clock Saturday they call it a day and spend the balance of the afternoon at a movie. That used to be my idea, too. But, just for an experiment, I plugged away one Saturday afternoon and, to my surprise, sold four orders, totaling forty-five dollars. Since then I've knocked off work Saturdays at five-thirty.

“Another point: most salesmen are inclined to dawdle over their lunches, often consuming a couple of hours for the rite. I lay out my day according to a rigid schedule and I follow that schedule. At eight-thirty I leave the office. At twelve-thirty I eat lunch. At one-fifteen I start to work; at five-thirty I quit. This means eight hours and a quarter steady plugging. I doubt if the average salesman averages over six hours' real work a day. Add to this my extra three and a half hours on Saturday afternoon, and I have worked fifteen and three-quarters hours more in a week than the others.

“According to these figures, my sales should total considerably over one-third more than those of my nearest rival. As a matter of fact, they come to only about a quarter more, which justifies my claim that there are abler natural salesmen in the organization than I. Hard plugging and tireless perseverance are the secrets of my success.

“Here's an episode which will throw some light on the value of the latter quality. It made a tremendous impression upon me at the time. Some years ago, when I first landed in this town, a bookstore man made me a proposition.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

“‘Here are a couple of thousand books which I’ve picked up for a song,’ he said. ‘It’s a humorous automobile skit. I think that some auto agency might buy it to distribute it to its mailing-list as an advertising novelty. We’ll insert an extra sheet bearing their ad. free of charge. Get out and see if you can sell the lot at nine cents each.’

“From the business directory in the back of the ‘phone-book, I learned that there were ninety-six auto agencies in the city; fortunately for me, pretty well concentrated into one section.

“For three days I hammered away at that single proposition. But I couldn’t make a sale. At the end of the fourth day I sold the entire lot to the ninety-sixth agency, *the very last one in the city*. As my commissions came to sixty dollars, I was well repaid for the effort. That was an object-lesson of the value of perseverance.”

“Show Me,” said this Buyer—and the Salesman Did

“In selling my line,” remarked a salesman for a wholesale grocery-house, “it figures right down to a question of merchandise. ‘Show me,’ says the purchaser, and if you can’t show him, all the hypnotic salesmanship in the world won’t land the order. Consequently, it behooves me to know my goods backward and forward, and also my competitors’. Otherwise I may be offering a better value than the other fellow and not be able to prove it.

“The other day I called on Calkins, the big restaurant man. I knew that he was about ready for a sizable order of canned goods.

“When I walked in, there was Todd, a competing salesman, seated at Calkins’ desk.

“‘Come over and sit down,’ said the restaurant man, who thought he might get us to bidding for the order.

SELLING THE RETAIL TRADE

"Before him on his desk were two opened cans of peaches, one of our 'Gilt Edge' brand, the other our competitor's 'Imperial.'

"'Now then,' said Calkins, addressing me, 'my *chef* reports that these brands are identical in quality. The size is the same. You quote three dollars and a half against Todd's three dollars and a quarter. Why shouldn't I place my order with him?'

"Todd grinned at me triumphantly.

"I promptly poured the contents of each can into separate dishes and drained off the liquid. Then reaching for the scales which Calkins always keeps on his desk, I proceeded to weigh the actual peaches.

"'If you want to pay for water, buy the Imperial,' said I, 'but if you're in the market for peaches, buy the Gilt Edge. Reduce the extra weight of actual peaches in the Gilt Edge can to percentage and you'll find that our brand at three dollars and a half is a 10-per-cent. better purchase than the Imperial at three and a quarter dollars,' and I figured it out for him on a slip of paper.

"Todd's cheerful grin suddenly vanished. He tried to cloud the issue by talking quality, but it didn't work. Ten minutes later I left with the signed order in my pocket.

"Which goes to show that knowledge is power, as the old philosophers long ago informed us."

How a Slow Pay Was Converted into a Good Customer

"But look here, Jennings," objected Webster, the firm's credit man, "it's possible, as you say, that Pitman is fundamentally sound. He may be, as he claims, land poor. But that doesn't help us any right now. He's reached the limit of his credit and I can't O. K. this order."

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

"It's a big order," countered the salesman. "It's taken at a price which shows a handsome profit, and I know that Pitman is as good as gold. He's short of cash, he admits. His capital is all tied up in good land steadily rising in value, land that he owns free and clear. It's a shame to alienate a good customer. Don't be an old woman, Webster. I'll be making Creston next Tuesday. Let me drop in and tell Pitman that the shipment is on the way."

"Nothing doing," was Webster's brief comment. "If I let you salesmen dictate the credit policy of the house, we'd bust in six months."

"Pitman," said Jennings, as he entered the former's store a day or two later, "our credit man is stewing over your rating. Now I know that you're good. I want to keep you on our books. Here's a scheme that occurred to me on the train this morning. Just give me your note for the amount involved, maturing in six months, bearing interest after sixty days. Stipulate in it that it is a lien against that five-acre lot of yours out on the Ridgewood road and I'll guarantee that your shipment will leave our warehouse within two days."

"All right," was the reply. "I've no objections to that arrangement. I'll look up the legal description of the property and give you the note before you leave town on the two-o'clock."

"There, that ought to satisfy you," remarked Jennings, as he laid the note on Webster's desk the following day. "Any bank will discount that at a reasonable rate. There's three times its value behind it in gilt-edge, unencumbered real estate."

"A good scheme," admitted the credit man. "I perceive

SELLING THE RETAIL TRADE

that you're a financier, Jennings, as well as a good salesman."

The Secret of this Salesman's Success

"One of the best ideas I ever got in my business came from the advertising manager of a daily paper," said a crack salesman. "I don't know whether or not he was the best man in his line in the country, but I *do* know that he is considered the best man in his organization, and as his organization owns and operates nearly thirty dailies, that's good enough. I met him at a business man's weekly lunch and decided to sound him for tips.

"'Why is it that you can sell more space than any man on your entire chain of dailies?' I inquired. 'Is it your canvass, your personality, your eloquence, or what is the factor that puts you where you are?'"

"He smiled. 'It most assuredly is not my canvass,' he replied, 'for I have no prepared speech. And neither is it a case of personality, because, to be frank, I'm not a particularly genial person, especially during business hours. As for eloquence, I can't claim that gift, as I am notoriously abrupt of speech. But I'll tell you the secret. When I enter a man's establishment I am not thinking so much of selling advertising as I am of how to merchandise his goods. And my chief asset is a very wide experience in solving sales problems. I keep my eyes and ears open and am ready with suggestions. After a call or two, I have a pretty fair grasp of what a man is carrying on his shelves and how his stock is moving, etc. Then I adapt to this man's business some scheme which I, or some other merchant, has worked successfully elsewhere. And, of course, it involves advertising. But by this time the merchant views me in the light of a business counselor rather than an

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

advertising solicitor, hence his readiness to adopt my suggestions.'

"I promptly began to apply this man's formula to my own sales problems. Whenever I delivered my sales talk I injected a lot of information as to how to sell my line after purchasing it. I kept on the watch for new sales plans, began to read the business magazines pretty closely, and before long was able to disseminate a good many practical ideas among my trade.

"Gradually I began to appear to the merchants in an extremely different aspect. Instead of viewing me with the suspicion attached to a man whose living is gained from persuading them to affix their signatures to an order, they began to consider me in the light of a friendly adviser.

"After some of my plans had worked successfully, of course I was solid. And as I was constantly on the road, I had splendid facilities for gathering information. To-day I am considered by my customers somewhat in the light of a traveling manager. If a scheme works well in Dayton, I investigate it and it's promptly put into execution through my entire territory. I am, of course, careful not to suggest the same plan to competing merchants. Now I am one of the best-paid salesmen in my line in the country. And, frankly, I attribute my success to the suggestion made by that casual acquaintance, the newspaper man."

IV

SALES MANAGEMENT

The Point System in Selling

“Very few salesmen work up to the limit of their capacities,” remarked an up-to-date sales manager. “And it is not to be wondered at. One reason is that, unlike the office man, no particular task is set for the salesman and no one is present to see that he does not relax his efforts. Furthermore, so much of his work shows no tangible results that he lacks the stimulus of seeing something accomplished for every ounce of effort expended. Thus, even though a salesman be working on straight commission, he fails to work as hard as he might.

“To overcome this natural inertia we have adopted what is called the point system. The point system results in a salesman’s feeling that for every bit of work he does he receives cash as well as credit. The psychological effect of this is immediate and startling. The salesmen themselves are surprised to see how much more they are really capable of doing.

“The point system is simple in theory, but somewhat intricate in practice. We select a certain easy-selling line and credit each salesman with one point for each dollar’s worth of sales of that article. Other lines, which sell with more difficulty, are credited with several points per dollar sale. This overcomes the tendency of a man’s thinking

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

only of gross sales and doing a big business which shows but a small net profit.

“In addition to awarding points for actual sales, we give them for each call, each report rendered, etc. This means that the salesmen feel that every bit of work they do counts for something. It is a splendid antidote for that four o'clock p. m. tired feeling.

“We pay a salary and bonus. To earn twenty-five dollars per week, for example, we expect a man to make five thousand points. If he secures another five hundred or one thousand points, he receives just so much more money as a bonus, figured at the same rate as his salary. Of course, we have to depend in great measure upon the men's honesty in rendering their reports. There is no question about sales, of course, but when it comes to number of calls made, some men might succumb to the temptation of padding. An occasional inspection, or check-up, conducted every month or two on some date not known to the salesman serves to cover this point.

“Since installing this system our sales have shown a big increase and our men are earning much more money. Altogether this experiment in efficiency has proved to be an unqualified success.”

Picking Profitable Timber

“If a man could invent a machine which would record the capacities of applicants for salesmen's positions, he could name his own price,” said a sales manager. “For, after a lifetime spent in the business, I am forced to confess that I can judge a salesman's ability only by his performance. And I can judge his performance only after a trial which costs us time and money.

“So far as I know, there is no line of work which presents

SALES MANAGEMENT

such difficulties from this viewpoint as that of selecting salesmen. All you have to depend upon is the man's record coupled with your impression of his personality. His record means but little, because you have no method of ascertaining just what conditions existed in his territories. This leaves you with nothing but your own judgment and power of perception to depend upon. And I, for one, have had enough experience to realize how unreliable are these as guides. It is only the bumptious young fellow of little experience who feels confident of his power to gauge applicants. I have rejected too many winners and accepted too many false alarms to pride myself on my ability in this direction.

“As for the written tests compiled by the psychological sharks, they are, in my opinion, useless. They serve to indicate the speed and accuracy of a man's mental processes. If these highbrows had spent a few years at my desk, they'd know that these qualities have little bearing upon salesmanship. I have bookkeepers right here in the office who can register 100 per cent. on tests of that nature and who couldn't sell whisky in the state of Maine. And I have star salesmen who present a pitiable showing when confronted with them.

“‘But can't you read character?’ you inquire.

“Of course I can read character. But the trouble is that more than character is required to make a good salesman. The power to sell is a mighty subtle quality. It is in some degree a natural talent, consciously developed by experience. A man may be honest, persistent, a good talker, possessed of a keen, quick intelligence, blessed with an attractive personality—and fall down utterly. And he may be a slow, lumpish chap, unattractive and unkempt, and bring in orders that keep the factory superintendent humping. The day may come when we can eliminate this expensive trial-

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

by-test-in-the-field, but it's not yet here. When it comes, the sales manager's life will be an easier one."

The Defects of a Salesman's Qualities

"Every one is handicapped by the defects of his qualities," remarked a sales manager; "that is to say, the possession of certain virtues almost inevitably implies the presence of certain weaknesses. The typical inventor, for example, is all imagination. He lives in the clouds, is absorbed in his visions of various labor-saving devices, and, when concentrating upon some concrete problem, forgets to eat or sleep. But it is seldom that one finds an inventor who possesses even the rudiments of commercial ability. As a rule, they die poor. The inventor, then, is a typical instance of the application of this axiom that every one has the defects of his qualities.

"The salesman is another example. It is seldom that one finds a crack performer who can be induced to take even reasonable pains regarding the details of his work. That very enthusiasm, that grim concentration upon one point, orders, which explains his power, seems to rob him of any ordinary horse sense when it comes to the details which play so large a part in contributing to any concern's net profit. As a result, the lot of a sales manager is not a bed of roses. The pluggers never cause any difficulty, but they never turn in any big orders. The phenoms keep the house in business and their paths are strewn with a sickening trail of cancellations, disputes over orders taken for goods not in stock, promises regarding delivery dates which are impossible of fulfilment, credit difficulties, errors in the actual amounts and dimensions of the orders, and the thousand and one petty troubles which can arise from lack of attention to details.

"Prayers, pleas, and exhortations are useless. The leopard cannot change his spots nor the star salesman his habits.

SALES MANAGEMENT

There is but one safeguard, and that is to so surround him with a protective network of system that, despite his carelessness, he cannot ignore the warning signs.

"I have evolved a system which always raises a laugh, but which serves its purpose. I made an analysis of the errors most commonly occurring, selected the principal ones, and had them conspicuously printed in tabulated form on all literature going to salesmen. The letter-heads upon which I write them, the daily reports which they send in, the order-blanks themselves, the room in which our sales conferences are held, the desks at which the salesmen sit—everywhere they are constantly confronted with the evidence of their sins. I have even staged contests with scarfpins and fobs as prizes for the lowest percentage of errors for a given period on the part of salesmen.

"In writing out an order, they have to check with a pencil each item in the error list. My men think I'm old-maidish on the subject, but this concentration on the error feature of our business is saving us thousands of dollars annually. And I have achieved a lot in the direction of remedying one defect of a good salesman's qualities—impatience of detail."

Handling Salesmen Scientifically

"Too often salesmen are judged by the single standard of results," remarked a sales manager, "while certain factors which play a large part in determining the results are not given due weight.

"An incompetent farmer can raise more corn in the Mississippi Valley than can the best farmer in the world on the coast of Labrador. And often there's almost as much difference between the territories allotted salesmen as there is between the two geographical divisions I have mentioned.

"When I joined this organization I found that we had a

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

force of seven salesmen, two covering the city and the balance the neighboring states. The original causes for the territorial divisions seemed lost in the mists of antiquity. The men worked for straight salaries and these were determined by a rule-of-thumb method into which entered such factors as volume of sales, length of service, age, and, last but not least, amount for which they were willing to work. There was no scientific method of determining each man's actual sales ability. The assumption was that all were equally valuable, but that good fortune in securing a rich territory played a part in the rate of remuneration.

"I began to analyze the situation. First, I ascertained what proportion of the possible customers in each man's territory he was selling. So vast a divergence appeared here that it was plain that some men were seeking to cover too much ground while others had not enough. I promptly readjusted the territorial divisions.

"Then I learned what proportion of the entire consumption of the product we sold in each territory each man covered. This is not exactly the same thing as the first test, proportion of the total number of possible customers. Then came the question as to the net profit to the firm on each man's sales. This served to show up the men who overlooked profits in favor of mere volume.

"The application of these and other common-sense ideas resulted in a revision of our estimates of each man's sales ability. Now our men are paid in accordance with their ability and value to the house, not merely upon the basis of results figured from a haphazard allotment of territories."

How Salesmen Select Employers

"In the old days, the only points in which a salesman was interested when accepting a job were the product, price,

SALES MANAGEMENT

territory, competition, and reputation of the house," said an experienced traveling man. "If satisfied regarding these factors, he figured that the rest was up to him.

"To-day, however, the wise salesman investigates other features. He wants to know what sort of support he will receive. For one thing, he's interested in the question of advertising; wants to know whether or not he'll be backed by vigorous mailing campaigns, and inquires as to the quantity and quality of trade-paper advertising.

"Furthermore, he asks whether or not he'll be supplied with a sales manual, displays considerable curiosity regarding the kind and amount of dealer helps; inquires as to whether or not he'll be routed by a traffic expert; and wants to know when the sales conferences are held.

"The salesman is fully justified in looking into these matters. He knows that competing houses are supplying this support; he realizes that unless it is rendered he'll be laboring under a handicap. And he feels that if his concern is not right up to the minute in modern practice, it is on the down grade, with the result that sooner or later he'll be hunting another job.

"Not a week passes but that some concern with a good proposition goes into a receiver's hands because of poor management. On the other hand, scores of concerns are steadily forging ahead with but mediocre basic advantages, but aided by that most vital of all factors, able, aggressive management. Men, material, and management—these are the big three of business. And the greatest of these is management. Backed by intelligent management, an average salesman can outsell a phenomenon who is handicapped by inertia in the home office.

"Experienced salesmen realize this. This is why the strongest concerns are almost invariably represented by particularly competent salesmen. Able management at-

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

tracts able men. A good salesman will refuse to work for a poor manager. For, more than the latter realizes, salesmen select employers quite as much as employers select salesmen. If you, a proprietor, want to attract the type of men who will help you win, see to it that you can do your part in supplying intelligent, consistent support."

Sales Manuals

"Language, spoken or written, is the only means we have of conveying thought," remarked a sales manager, "but it is a far from perfect medium. The reason for this is that the same words convey different meanings to different people. This is because of the personal associations of words. Certain prejudices exist in the minds of all of us. They are connected with certain words. Utter words which awaken these prejudices, instantly the mind begins to reject, a hostile attitude develops, and, as a consequence, progress is prevented.

"At one of our fortnightly sales conferences I brought up the question of our compiling a sales manual. A sales manual is, of course, merely a condensed compendium of information regarding selling a product, gathered chiefly from the combined experiences of your salesmen.

"Some of our older salesmen opposed the suggestion. They were prejudiced against the idea. To them it meant learning salesmanship 'out of a book.' And analogous reasoning, that terrible foe to clear thinking, betrayed itself. Because they had known mediocre salesmen connected with firms which issued manuals, they concluded that the manuals were responsible for poor salesmanship.

"I saw that the situation demanded tactful handling. I dropped the subject, but for the next few meetings had stenographic reports made of the proceedings. As each man

SALES MANAGEMENT

narrated some instance in which he successfully met a novel objection, it was set down in black and white, later to be typed. The men began to come to my desk to consult these records.

“Finally I selected the most valuable data, added to them certain fundamental principles of sales psychology, had this material printed in a little pamphlet entitled ‘Sales Conference Proceedings,’ and gave each man a copy.

“They perused them interestedly, partly because each man found some contribution of his own included. Now they wouldn’t be without a copy. And I verily believe that it never occurred to some of the original objectors that they are using a sales manual.”

Scientific Management Applied to a Canvassing Crew

It has been well said that scientific management in industrial plants means that instead of buying an employee’s time in bulk, the employer purchases the employee’s time according to detailed specifications. Every motion made by the worker during his working hours follows a rigid schedule previously determined. The result is that his productive power is greatly increased, to the benefit of both employer and employee.

Scientific management as applied to factories is about twenty years old. Of late years it has been applied to salesmanship, with good results. The day of turning a horde of canvassers loose with vaguely worded instructions has passed. Intelligent, scientific management has awakened to a sense of its responsibilities, and now canvassing campaigns are conducted on a basis which, if applied to governments, would be called distinctly paternal.

A house-to-house canvassing campaign conducted some three or four years ago in connection with the introduction

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

of a new shortening throws some light upon the modern method of management. Every detail was thoroughly worked out through experiments upon small units previous to the formulation of a conclusion to be applied to the entire force.

The first problem was the selection of sound material. This was attained through searching the local Y. M. C. A.'s and employment agencies of the better class, with a view to avoiding the pathetic specimens of broken-down, shabby gentility which in our great cities drift about from one canvassing job to another in such quantities.

It was considered that years of discouragement had so weakened the aggressive force of this type that it was useless to waste time and effort upon it. As a result, the canvassing crew, when finally assembled, contained hardly any man of previous experience in this line of work.

Then each member of the crew was individually carefully coached in the field and finally turned loose in charge of a crew manager.

Upon the housewife's answering the canvasser's ring, the latter handed her a pail of the product, accompanying this act with a suitable introductory sentence previously memorized. As he extended the pail with his left hand, he tore off the parchment covering with his right.

This made an instant impression. To see a brand-new pail of the product apparently sacrificed for the sake of demonstrating its merits to the prospect was distinctly flattering. As a matter of fact, the sacrifice was merely apparent. The pail was immediately recovered in the wagon and used again further down the street..

To make certain that the prospect's acceptance of the pail would insure an opportunity for the delivery of the canvass, the demonstrator instantly produced from his pocket a coupon and pencil. The coupon he held in his left hand, the

SALES MANAGEMENT

pencil in his right. This prevented the woman's returning the pail, and left her no alternative save to place it upon the floor and escape or to listen to the canvasser.

By this strategy, practically every housewife seen was thoroughly interviewed. The campaign proved to be an unqualified success. Scientific management scored another triumph.

Keeping Posted on Customers and Prospective Customers

"So Hammond is going to quit," mused the sales manager. "Going to enter another line of business. Too bad—one of our best salesmen. Now we'll have to break a new man into that territory. We've a good line on all Hammond's customers, but we don't know a thing about his prospects. I've simply got to devise a system to avoid the loss of time and money entailed by occurrences of this sort."

From this affair resulted the card system now installed in the offices of this concern. At the end of each day the salesmen, by filling out cards, submit complete reports on the day's work. Space is left for all vitally important details—with a liberal allowance for remarks. Upon arriving in the sales manager's office, these cards are carefully filed. One file contains the cards of prospects; the other, those of customers. Thus the executive keeps thoroughly posted on the condition of affairs in all territory covered.

This system is, in many respects, superior to the previous method of having the salesman write a daily letter. Through the questions to be answered, no opportunity is allowed for the salesman to carelessly omit important points, and the limited space prevents the inclusion of a mass of unimportant data.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

In the event of a salesman's resignation, the new man in the field is thoroughly posted upon the exact status of both customers and prospects before his arrival.

In supplying data regarding follow-up calls, this plan is of great benefit to the salesman. It permits the sales manager to remind him of calls to be made which he might otherwise forget. From every angle it is a success.

Newspaper Clippings Often a Valuable Adjunct to the Sales Department

Were your premises ever burglarized? If so, were you promptly approached, either through the mail or personally, by burglary-insurance companies, safe-deposit bank companies, burglar-alarm companies, companies supplying night-watchmen service?

If you weren't, some one in your vicinity has not yet awakened to the sales-suggesting possibilities of newspaper clippings.

Newspaper clippings intelligently handled will bring thousands of dollars' worth of business to many concerns. And they can be obtained from clipping bureaus for from one to five cents apiece.

Here are a few samples of the efficacy of clippings:

A manufacturer of a device for protecting window-cleaners from falls receives clippings of every such accident in the United States.

A manufacturer of badges and regalia keeps posted, through clippings, on impending municipal celebrations.

Architects, builders, contractors, insurance men, fire-extinguisher and automatic-sprinkler men keep close tabs on fires through clippings.

A savings-bank's treasurer believes that people who become engaged or married are beginning to save money.

SALES MANAGEMENT

Clippings covering such happy events supply him with prospects for his literature.

Monument manufacturers and stained-glass-window men receive clippings regarding the decease of prominent men.

A baby-specialty store, which does a big mail-order business, receives clippings of births from all over the country.

Artificial-limb men find clippings invaluable.

A manufacturer of a protective device for freight-elevators found it difficult to interest architects and owners in his product. He concluded to try to get a bill through the Legislature making it obligatory to install such a safeguard. But where to get his data demonstrating the necessity of protection? A clipping bureau solved the problem. In a few weeks he had assembled a large list covering elevator accidents. Read before the Legislature when the bill was introduced, they carried conviction and the bill was passed.

Many lines of business are in no degree adapted to the use of clippings. But hundreds which could use them have not yet awakened to the fact. Have your competitors the drop on you in this regard?

Initiative Develops a Novel Distributing System

Advertising-men are fond of arguing as to which is the most important factor in an advertisement—vigor of copy or strength of display.

As a matter of fact, the two elements can hardly be considered separately; a good advertisement must have both features. It matters not how convincingly an advertisement be written, if it be not read. Strong display insures a reading. Striking display, on the other hand, accompanied by weak copy is of no avail. The object of an advertisement is not merely to gain a wide reading, but to convince a profitable proportion of its readers.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

Similarly, two factors are requisite for success in publishing a newspaper or magazine: First, reading-matter which the public wants; second, a competent circulation department. The circulation department of a magazine corresponds to the display of an advertisement. It must *gain* the readers; the inherent virtues of the publication must *hold* them.

One of the world's most successful magazine publishers has blazed new trails in the circulation end of the business. The circulation of one of his organs, a weekly which totals over two million, was largely obtained through the creation of a vast army of boy solicitors.

Recently he has developed this idea even further. He conceives his subscription staff as pupils in a sort of vocational school. We quote from a booklet describing the plan:

These two somewhat remarkable offers are now being made by the Blank Publishing Company:

1. To Young Men

For any young man fulfilling certain conditions, we guarantee to secure, upon request, a good salaried position with a reputable concern in or near his home town.

2. To Employers

We offer to send you, when they are ready for employment, young men trained in business fundamentals, particularly salesmanship, with good records for three years in school and with us, and who, we believe, will develop into good business men.

The plan which makes these offers possible has been described by leading educators as one of the most practical examples of real vocational education in the country.

Employers usually complain that the young men and boys who come to them for jobs have had no preliminary training of business value.

SALES MANAGEMENT

“What the modern child suffers from most seriously,” says Prof. John Dewey of Columbia University, “is that his schooling is chiefly directed toward making him absorb a great deal of information upon a number of subjects which, under our present system, are not linked in any vital way with the practical details of the life which the child is about to enter.”

The link with the practical details of business life is being supplied for thousands of boys by the vocational plan of the League of Blank Salesmen.

More than fifty thousand young men and boys in all parts of the country sell the Blank publications under the direct control of the Blank organizations. They earn more than one million dollars a year. And while they *earn* they also *learn*.

From this vast selling force, kept under constant observation, are trained up the young men who, by successive stages, reach the rank of master salesman and become entitled to the guarantee of employment.

To become a master salesman the boy must have fulfilled these requirements:

He must have sold one of the Blank publications for at least two years, and all three for at least one; he must have a perfect record for promptness in ordering and remitting for at least a year; he must maintain a high sale of all three publications; he must meet the essential physical requirements; he must maintain an excellent school average in all studies, and must present a letter from the principal of his school to that effect. He must be “physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.”

Upon election, the master salesman receives a gold insignia and an engraved certificate. The master salesman's compensation is somewhat increased by a monthly “dividend.” He is given a year's subscription for some periodical devoted

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

to business, and in addition he receives the promise of employment.

This promise is made possible by the co-operation of hundreds of business houses in all sections—manufacturers, retail merchants, wholesalers, etc., who have long observed in their own cities the activity of Blank agents, and who welcome the opportunity to hire young men so trained.

The organization by which this vocational training is carried on is a vast one. At the home office is a central head, with six assistants, each in charge of one section of the country. Traveling under their direction are fifty road men, selecting boys in various towns, supplying selling ideas, building local organizations, and “gingering up” the district agents.

Of these district agents there are about two thousand, covering practically every city and town of more than three thousand population. They are in direct charge of the fifty thousand boys and young men who sell the Blank publications, although the home office and the road men are also in constant touch both with the boys and with their parents.

The first step toward the League of Blank Salesmen is when the boy joins his local Ten Club. This is an organization formed by the district agent among his most promising boys. The Ten Club has occasional entertainments and sometimes headquarters of its own. Its chief function is to instill the idea of organization and advancement by degrees.

A member of a Ten Club who is attending school regularly, has sold one of the Blank publications for six months, and is at the time of application selling a fair quantity of all three publications, and who has a perfect record for promptness in ordering and in remitting, may become a member of the league.

He receives a monthly house organ, full of inspiration and the newest ideas on how to sell. He is given books out-

SALES MANAGEMENT

lining all the methods that have proved successful. He receives encouraging letters from the home office, advice from the road man, and constant oversight from the district agent. His parents and his school-teachers are in correspondence with the home office, and he is constantly being shown how to get the interest and support of prominent citizens in his home town.

The next step is to become an expert salesman. The boy must have given longer service and must show a higher standard both in Blank work and in school. He must also pass with an average of 70 per cent. an examination in Blank salesmanship as taught in various manuals which are supplied to him.

Then comes the final rank of master salesman.

All this time the boy is being helped to sell in various well-defined ways.

The net of it is a downright training in straight salesmanship by modern intensive methods—selling the customer the thing he wants and needs by getting to him at the right time, in the right place, with the right arguments.

Sales Management

“When I came in here,” said a sales manager, “the men were paid straight salaries. I planned to change this to a drawing account and commission arrangement, but did not act immediately. To have done so would have been to create ill-feeling. I concluded to wait until other measures increased the men’s sales, with the result that they would welcome the change rather than resent it.

“I began, therefore, by installing a system of direct or mail advertising for the purpose of aiding the salesmen. Weekly assaults were launched through the mail. Within a few weeks results began to accrue. Then I began to en-

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

courage the customers to place orders through the mail, all such business to be credited, of course, to the man covering the territory in which it originated. The increase in volume was sufficient to show a good net profit over the cost of the advertising.

"Then I staged a two-months sales contest, the prizes to be awarded for the greatest proportionate gains. The first prize was a watch, with an inscription inside the case explaining the significance of the award. I have always found that some article which has space for an inscription of this sort awakens great enthusiasm. One reason is that the men feel that here is tangible, lasting evidence of ability, and that if ever they want a new job they can display it as a testimonial. The contest proved to be a potent stimulus for greater efforts. Sales showed a strong increase.

"That was the psychological moment in which to shift the basis of payment, I concluded. The men had seen their sales increase and would be inclined to agree with my viewpoint, that they could actually earn more by operating on that plan. I explained the new system to them, taking pains to feature this point, and made it clear that the rate of commission had been scientifically figured for each territory, the percentage varying in accordance with findings established by exhaustive analysis of the field's possibilities. There were no objections.

"Then I took up the question of actual salesmanship. We devoted an hour to the subject every Saturday afternoon. Demonstration sales were held, and also series of talks, each man being requested to tell 'how he cracked his toughest nut.' This elicited a great deal of valuable individual information regarding selling our product. A stenographer was present so that the data could be embodied in a sales bulletin to be distributed later.

"Right now I am developing a plan whereby two salesmen

SALES MANAGEMENT

shall cover each territory—one, the regular man, to call upon the large dealers; another, a utility man of the plugger type, to call on the smaller concerns. I've a strong impression that it's a mistake for a hundred-dollar-a-week man to devote valuable time to selling a ten-dollar dealer. Use your heavy artillery on the big fellows; pick off the smaller ones with guns of less caliber—that's the idea behind this experiment.

"Sales have more than doubled since I took hold some two years ago. Part of this is due to better general conditions, the balance to better methods."

How to Handle an Army of Nationally Distributed Salesmen

"Every man is as lazy as he dares to be," some cynic has remarked. It is this tendency of human nature, this inertia which most people have to combat, which explains the efficacy of branch sales offices in handling nationally distributed products.

"Mr. Dalton," said Nutting, sales manager of the Dalton Oil Company, "I think that our present system is all wrong. It's like an army of privates with one general. We should have colonels, majors, captains, sergeants, etc. We've an army of salesmen covering the country and, under the methods now in force, cannot exert sufficient control over them. They're responsible only to the main office. It's all very well to say that his salary and commission supply sufficient incentive for a man to exert his best efforts. They don't. Many men making thirty-five dollars a week know that by redoubling their efforts they could earn twice as much. But without the stimulus and support of personal sales-managership they won't make the effort. I've de-

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

veloped several effective schemes right here from Buffalo in the way of prizes, etc., for the best records. But I want to establish branch sales headquarters throughout the country, put a resident sales manager in charge, and watch the result. Let me try it in one city and see how it works. The local manager can keep office hours of, say, from eight to ten and from four to six. The balance of the time he can act as one of the city salesmen."

"Try it in whatever city you prefer," was the brief response. "Six months should tell the story."

It was in Nutting's office two weeks later.

"Now, Carter, I've told you all I know about the nature of the work," said Nutting. "The rest is up to you. You'll handle eight men in and about St. Louis. Keep close tabs on them. If they have a man interested, but can't quite close him, you're to be Johnny on the spot. See that each man works—really works—from nine to five. Go over their daily reports carefully, then mail a duplicate to me. With you behind him, each man should get 25 per cent. more business out of his territory. You can inject ginger when they're lagging. I can't brace a man up from a distance of five hundred miles.

"If this plan succeeds, I expect to appoint between thirty and forty local sales managers within a year. Tell your men that each one stands a show of landing one of those jobs. From now on you're responsible for Missouri. Go to it." And with a hearty handshake Carter was gone.

Two months was enough to tell the story. Missouri began to pull ahead. Backed by Carter, the salesmen were working harder. More than that, they were working more cheerfully. To have a man behind you who is paid to listen to your troubles helps. Often Carter helped close an ob-

SALES MANAGEMENT

durate prospect. Many customers are impressed by a call from the "local manager."

To-day the Dalton Oil Company has over thirty branch sales managers. And as a result, the country is being covered more intensively than ever before.

A Plan Which Prevented Salesmen from Selling Goods Which Could Not be Delivered

"A crack traveling salesman is an extremely independent individual," said a sales manager, recently, "and he has a right to be. No matter what may happen—whether times be good or bad, he is always sure of a job and a livelihood. The supply will never equal the demand. Sales ability is as valuable as an annuity. Yes, more so; for the annuity company might fail.

"Crack salesmen, however, are not always the most valuable to a house. Sometimes, in the long run, the steady plugger is a better asset. Too many of the stars, confident of their ability to nail the orders, neglect certain little tasks involving some drudgery, which must be done if the house is to render its customers proper service.

"Take the matter of stock shortages and price changes, for instance. Most mercantile houses notify their traveling men by mail daily of any changes in this regard. The salesman should, of course, go over his price-list and make the needed corrections, and at the same time eliminate from his samples any lines in which shortages exist. The more brilliant the salesman, the less likely is he to be willing to take this trouble. It means, perhaps, fifteen minutes of uninteresting work. It's amazing to learn how averse to even this amount of drudgery is the average traveling salesman.

"Now what happens when an order is taken for goods of which we're short? We must write the customer an apologetic letter full of 'we regret . . . hoping that it will not in-

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

convenience you'—etc. The latter has been counting on delivery—possibly turned down a rival house which had offered a supply, and naturally is very much annoyed. Often it makes an enemy of a good customer. At best, a very injurious and lasting impression of unreliability remains in the customer's mind.

“We suffered a great deal from this source of trouble for a long time. Finally, as a lesson to our force, I discharged one otherwise good salesman. And still the trouble continued. Recently, however, I evolved a plan which has reduced this difficulty 80 per cent.

“With each bulletin of price changes and shortages I include a blank which reads as follows:

I have received Bulletin No. ——— and I give my word of honor that the changes indicated have been made in my price-lists and samples.

“This is to be returned with the salesman's daily report. There must be some psychological secret in the wording of this phrase, for it has worked a reformation in the cases of some of the most incorrigible offenders. Trouble from accepting orders for goods of which we're short has been reduced to a minimum. In not one case as yet have we received evidence that the salesman had deliberately prevaricated in signing the blank. My own idea is that it acts a good deal like the temperance pledge. The signing of one's name makes an ineradicable impression which helps in supporting one's resolve.”

**“Watch the Net as Well as the Gross,” says
this Sales Manager**

“Some time ago we announced that we would pay a handsome cash bonus monthly to the salesman showing the greatest proportionate increase in sales,” said a sales manager.

SALES MANAGEMENT

“The total volume of sales increased 22 per cent. the first month. But our net profit showed no such increase. The men, naturally, had concentrated on the lines most responsive to additional effort. And, also quite naturally, these were goods on which we made the smallest margin of profit. Furthermore, expense accounts jumped about 35 per cent.

“A little thought showed us the flaw in our original proposition. We announced that thereafter the bonus should be paid to the man whose increased sales showed the greatest additional net profit to the house. This served to hold down expense accounts and also to increase sales on goods which showed a good profit.

“Thereafter we analyzed each order as it was received; charged against it original cost, overhead, salary, and traveling expenses, thus leaving just what each salesman’s efforts were *netting* us each month.

“The first month of the revised policy showed a total gain of but 16 per cent. over the previous month. But the additional net profit to the concern was far in excess of that of the previous month.”

A Plan Which Prevents the Control by Salesmen of Business Which Properly Belongs to the House

“A sales manager should seek to keep in close touch with his concern’s customers,” said one, recently. “Otherwise when a salesman leaves he may carry a great deal of business with him.

“I find that the telephone is a great aid in maintaining close relations with our customers. In fact, it is in that way that I handle most of the routine business arising from the daily needs of our regular trade. This serves to free my salesmen for the purpose of creating new business and it

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

tends to centralize business with the house rather than dispersing it among salesmen. Too many salesmen create a profitable clientele and then degenerate into mere order-takers. To hold their positions, my salesmen have to *sell*, not merely collect orders."

A Scientific Method of Judging Salesmen's Records

"The variation in territories is so great that it is a mistake to pay a salesman purely upon a basis of sales," said an executive, recently.

"I once lost a remarkably good man because I did not realize the conditions which confronted him in a certain field and refused to pay him what he was really worth.

"Now I have our territories analyzed under such heads as Population, Number of Dealers, Area, Amount of Competition, Per Capita Wealth, Traveling Facilities, Quantity of Our Product Previously Sold, etc.

"By reducing all these factors to a percentage basis I am able to conclude just what a salesman's record should be in his particular field.

"Many surprises attended my first experiment with this plan. Certain men whom I had thought phenomena because of their total sales turned out to be but average. One man whom I had contemplated discharging showed up as a top-liner. Most sales managers simply don't know who their good men are. Sales alone are, in many lines, no criterion. It's sales in relation to the difficulty of selling which fixes a man's value to the house."

This Salesman Looks Ahead

"Yes, Graham is a good salesman," conceded the sales manager, "but Tarbell is a better one."

SALES MANAGEMENT

"How do you figure that out?" inquired the cashier. "Whenever there has been an opportunity to compare the two men, hasn't Graham put more customers on our books? When they exchanged territories didn't Graham develop more new accounts in Tarbell's field than the latter did in Graham's?"

"That's all very true," was the reply, "but it's also true that the gross volume developed by Tarbell surpassed that obtained by Graham in the same period. In other words, Tarbell's customers distribute more of our goods. And the reason is that Tarbell's method of selling is quite different from Graham's. He sells with an eye to the future. When he induces a dealer to stock our line, he talks prestige first and profits second. Because we are heavy national advertisers and our goods are known all over the Union to be of high quality, Tarbell convinces the dealer that to represent us means a great deal in fixing his local standing. As a consequence, the dealer is glad to display our goods conspicuously; he co-operates with us on window displays; he uses our dealer-helps constantly; features our cards and signs; in a word, makes a determined effort to push our goods. Naturally, he sells a great quantity.

"Now Graham is a different type. When he gets the dealer's name on the dotted line he considers his work done. And, as a master of the technique of selling, he is Tarbell's superior. He certainly yanks 'em in, often against their will. But he doesn't exhibit as much foresight as his rival. His canvass emphasizes profit only; prestige is hardly mentioned. As a result, his customers make no particular effort to feature our line, and, naturally, his sales per customer over a six-months period are less.

"It's on the reorders that Tarbell shines. Compare the

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

gross volumes of the two men and you'll see that Tarbell is the more valuable man to the house."

Holding Customers

"Salesmen are inclined to think too much of the customers they're going to get and not enough about holding those they have," remarked a sales manager, recently.

"It requires a good deal less effort to hold a customer than to gain one, and I'm always emphasizing this in talking to my sales force. Most new customers are a result of some competitor's mistakes. There's food for thought in that idea.

"When I stepped into this job I had the bookkeeper supply me with a list of customers gained and lost during the year just passed.

"I found that we had gained about five hundred and lost about three hundred and fifty, making a net gain of one hundred and fifty. 'But why did we lose three hundred and fifty, and why did our competitors lose five hundred?' I pondered. 'Why did eight hundred and fifty concerns change their buying connections in this territory within a year?'

"A quiz of the salesmen revealed nothing. I hired a man to get out and interview the three hundred and fifty who had left us. Here's what he discovered as causes of the shift:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 24 per cent. | Careless in shipping department. |
| 15 " " | Too stringent credit policy. |
| 17 " " | Carelessness and impudence on the part of the salesmen. |
| 11 " " | Goods were unsatisfactory for buyer's purpose. |

SALES MANAGEMENT

10 per cent. Salesman had exceeded his authority in quoting terms and discounts.

To the balance of 23 per cent. no particular cause could be assigned covering all.

“But this gave me something from which to work. The shipping department was promptly overhauled and reorganized. The credit department was notified to mend its ways. Several salesmen were treated to heart-to-heart talks.

“Finally it was concluded to make a united effort for a better showing the following year. Close attention to this feature, holding what we gained, resulted in our losing only seventy-eight customers that year as against three hundred and fifty the previous one. Since then we have steadily improved our record in this connection.”

Suiting the Salesman to the Job

“Why didn't I hire Parsons?” said the sales manager, in response to the question of the salesman's former employer. “Merely because he wouldn't prove a satisfactory man for us in the long run. Parsons is what I call a ‘knock-down and drag-out’ type of salesman. He almost bludgeons his prospects into giving him an order. For your line of work, where he got their names on the dotted line for a year's contract, he was an ideal man. He is probably an abler salesman than any man on my staff. But he'd never score a permanent success with this house.

“Our customers buy in small quantities, but frequently. They'd fall for Parsons' canvass the first time and deny him an interview thereafter. I'm speaking from experience. I've seen it work out before. Parsons is a good man in a line where resales are not necessary. He could sell auto-

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

mobiles, insurance, cash registers, or the thousand and one lines in which the first sale is the vital thing. But for this business he's the wrong type. He'd come in the first month with a high record. From then on he'd hit the toboggan. A man of Parsons' ability will never lack a job. But this isn't the sort of job into which he'd fit."

Selecting Salesmen

"In my opinion, about 70 per cent. of an outside salesman's success is dependent upon his ability to keep everlastingly at it," said a sales manager, recently.

"That is why I do not believe that psychological tests for the selection of salesmen are of very great value. The college professors who devised this method assume that intelligence is the measure of a man's ability as a salesman. I utterly disagree with this conclusion.

"A man might score 100 per cent. in the tests, which I have inspected, and be unable to sell a car-load of shells to-day on the Somme front.

"No, selling is a test of what I call character as well as of intelligence. The power to keep hammering away just as cheerfully at four P. M., after a day of turndowns, as at nine A. M. is what makes a salesman. Whether or not this is due to the possession of a positive force, moral courage, or a negative quality, invulnerability, doesn't interest me. But a salesman must have it.

"In selecting timber for our sales staff I proceed on this premise. If I advertise for a man, I word the ad. so that it will discourage all but the most dogged types. I paint a picture of the job in the darkest colors—all but the remuneration item. In interviewing the applicants, I pursue the same policy. Then I send them off to think it over. If after this third degree a man returns the next day, it is

SALES MANAGEMENT

pretty good evidence that he has the right stuff in him. My experience has served to convince me that this is the proper system."

What a Sales Manager Should Know

"Merely because a man is a good salesman, it does not necessarily follow that he will develop into a good sales manager," said a manufacturer, recently.

"In fact, there are some grounds for believing that it is unlikely that the crack salesman has the characteristics necessary for the desk job. Most people have the defects of their qualities.

"Theoretically, an able salesman is a motor type, and, hence, is not equipped to conduct the scientific, analytical market investigations which are required for the successful prosecution of a sales campaign. Mental types, who, as a rule, are poor salesmen, are demanded for this sort of work. In actual practice, however, one often finds the most contradictory traits combined in the same man.

"Too many sales managers think that if they have the men's sales by months and the total sales of the concern, they are equipped to intelligently administer the duties of the job. The analysis of the bookkeeper's records which would enable them to act as real 'trouble-shooters'—that is, put their fingers on weak spots the instant they develop, is distasteful to men of this type.

"As a matter of fact, the sales manager should keep records which show, not only the men's total sales, but their sales by lines, by grades (high or low), new customers added, new prospects called upon, proportion of sales to new and to old customers, increase or decrease of sales to each old customer, average value of each salesman's shipments compared to house average, other salesmen's averages, number

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

of returns, distribution of consumer advertising material to each salesman's customers, and so on.

"Thus, in writing his staff, he can tell them exactly what they're doing in comparison with their own past records and the other salesmen's past and present showings; he can indicate at just what points their methods are weak; in a word, he is in a position to maintain a smoothly running, well-oiled machine; detect any knocks the moment they appear, and apply the oil of intelligent understanding to the proper bearings.

"All these data are on the books in every office. To take them off and present them in tabulated form requires but a day's work a month for some clerk. Three dollars thus expended monthly should greatly increase the efficiency of the sales force. The information thus gained, intelligently applied, means all the difference between operating in the dark and in broad daylight. But it is a fact that many sales managers lack this information and, consequently, manage their staffs about as Robert Owen, the famous English economist, managed the cotton-factory to which he was appointed manager at the age of twenty-one, at a time when he hadn't the remotest idea of what were the functions of the various machines—by keeping their mouths shut and looking wise."

A Failure-proof Method of Securing Successful Agents

"I used to secure my agents through correspondence," said the proprietor of a concern which does a big volume of business selling teas, coffees, flavoring extracts, etc., entirely through canvassers. "I obtained applications through liner ads. in the newspapers and closed them through the mail.

"But this method was not altogether satisfactory. A large proportion of the agents thus obtained failed to make

SALES MANAGEMENT

good. And I always had a feeling that many of them would have succeeded if properly handled. I was convinced that it was a lack of training in selling my specific products which handicapped them.

“Finally I secured a sales expert and put my problem up to him. He promptly lined up a force selected from our ablest canvassers. These men were put upon a straight salary basis and thoroughly drilled in the principles of successful salesmanship. It developed that many of them were what my sales manager called ‘instinctive salesmen’; in other words, they had never analyzed the factors which contributed to the successful culmination of an interview. He forced them to analyze their own actions, thus equipping them to train others.

“This accomplished, these men were allotted certain cities. Their assignment was to interview, select, and instruct applicants in these territories. Before their arrival, liner ads. were inserted in the local papers, thus assuring them of plenty of material from which to select upon their arrival.

“A tentative selection made, the instructor then took the new salesman out into the field. He showed him the proper method of approach, the point at which to seek to close, the right method of meeting objections, and, in short, all the sales strategy and tactics he had learned from his own experience.

“In his spare time he operated independently, crediting all sales he made to the new man whose territory he was working. This encouraged the new aspirant and showed him that the company stood behind him.

“The result of this policy was gratifying in the extreme. Under our former system, only 5 per cent. of the applicants for the position became permanent representatives. Now over 70 per cent. are appointed, and of this number only

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

10 per cent. fail to make good. Just a case of knowing how to handle men."

A Hundred Door-bells a Day

"Many men are like children," said Grantley, the successful crew manager of a force of house-to-house piano salesmen. "They'll do what they're told to, and no more. They have to have tasks set for them. But it's surprising what simple devices will sometimes spur them on to increased efforts. My men, for instance, work on a salary and commission basis. One would think that the commission element were sufficient incentive to stimulate their best efforts. But it isn't. It takes a good deal of sheer character to hammer away all day every day, facing hostile servants, healthy bulldogs, and similar obstacles with which all house-to-house canvassers are familiar.

"My men were doing fairly well, but I was not altogether satisfied. I had a strong impression that they were calling it a day at about three o'clock in the afternoon. Finally I evolved a simple plan. One morning I called them all together. I delivered a heart-to-heart talk, sympathizing with their troubles to some extent, but assuring them that we must get better results.

"Now, then, fellows, it's hard to stick to this eternal hammering from nine-thirty to five. I know, because I've been through it. But it's the only way you can make good. Hereafter I want every last man in this crew to pull one hundred door-bells a day. You can't deliver one hundred solicitations. I don't expect you to. But you can pull one hundred door-bells and check them off as you pull them. If you walk fast, your day's work will be over by four o'clock. And every morning I want each man to tell me that he's pulled his one hundred bells the day previous.'

SALES MANAGEMENT

“Well, it worked like a charm. Sales promptly increased over 20 per cent. And commissions, of course, likewise. Several of the men told me that they found it easier to work with a set task before them. It eliminated the mental effort required to drive themselves to their work. And as I make it a practice to quiz them every morning about their yesterday’s performance, there seems to be no danger of their backsliding.”

This Man’s Reputation as a Sales Manager is Due to His Methods Rather than to His Ability in Handling Men

“Yes, I have built a reputation as a sales manager,” said Ayer, with a smile. ‘It’s remarkable what results Ayer’s men get,’ is often said of my staff. As a matter of fact, I have no particular talent for handling men; it’s my method of handling commodities which has built my reputation.

“For some years I have specialized on the introduction of household articles—washing-machines, kitchen cabinets, vacuum cleaners, etc. My last campaign was on electric irons.

“My every effort is expended on getting the article into the home. Once there, if it has merit, it will sell itself. And it’s because I have carried the trial-offer idea to greater lengths than most men that I’ve built my reputation as a successful sales manager.

“Take my last campaign, for example. The electric company engaged me to install electric irons. I loaded ten thousand upon wagons and sent them out in charge of a demonstration crew. An iron was left in each house. Nothing was demanded but a signed receipt—no deposit, no charge of any sort. Then we let the matter rest. A week later orders began to come in.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

“Three weeks later I sent my salesmen out. What was the result? Out of the ten thousand irons distributed about ninety-five hundred were purchased. You see?—the irons sold themselves. Once the women became accustomed to them, they couldn’t get along without them. And I added one more victory to my string of successes. ‘A wonderful sales manager—Ayer.’ A wonderful convenience, a good electric iron; that’s the real truth of the matter.”

Keeping a Grip on Customers

“Salesmen are not inclined to be very systematic as regards details,” said a sales manager, “and for my part, I try to lift as much routine work as possible from their shoulders.

“Few salesmen keep a record of comparative sales to their customers, and, consequently, have the vaguest idea as to whether or not they are holding as large a share of a man’s business as they should be. This information, however, is necessary to intelligently plan a concern’s sales efforts.

“I myself have a record kept covering exactly this ground. Each of our regular customers has a card in my file which gives the quarterly totals of his purchases from us for a period of three years back. This is kept up to date, and once every three months I go over it to ascertain whether or not sales are holding up in each case as they should be. Any diminution means a notification to the salesman covering that section, giving full details as to past and present conditions. He thereupon makes it his business to find the explanation. Sometimes general conditions or increased local competition have decreased the dealer’s total sales. In such cases little can be done. But more frequently we find that a competitor is strengthening his grip. Fore-

SALES MANAGEMENT

warned is forearmed. We promptly give battle and exert every effort to yank the customer back in line. Letters from the main office; increased support in the way of dealer-helps and local advertising, and, last, but not least, closer attention from the salesmen—these measures bring good results.

“This policy of constantly watching for leaks, and perpetual care of our fences, has resulted in our *holding* a far greater proportion of the business we gain than do our competitors. And it costs less in time and money to hold a customer once gained than to add a new one.”

Why Some Salesmen Can Sell Only Certain Lines

“Speaking generally,” said a sales manager, “my experience has forced me to the conclusion that some men can sell, while others can’t. In other words, the ability is to a great degree native. But despite this, it is also true that some men can sell only certain commodities to only certain types, while others can sell anything—anywhere—to almost anybody.

“The distinction between these two sorts of salesmen, however, I believe is almost purely a matter of mental attitude. I believe that the former examples are potentially just as good salesmen as the latter. But they limit themselves in their own minds, and the results are merely a reflection of this attitude.

“I know one man, for example, who sells magazine subscriptions and also sets of books. He earns about one hundred and twenty-five dollars per week. Nothing can persuade this man to cover an office-building. He will work only in the wholesale and industrial sections of a city. Says that he’s afraid of frosted glass. This is a typical example of self-limitation. If this man would take himself

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

in hand and rid himself of his idea that there's a jinx connected with office-buildings, he would find the latter field just as productive as the territories in which he prefers to operate.

"Another man of my acquaintance was, for years, star salesman for a wholesale grocery-house. He once tackled automobiles and scored a failure. This was perhaps because of two reasons: first, lack of thorough knowledge of the product he was handling, and, second, inability to make a good impression upon women. After a couple of months without making a sale, he quit and returned to his former line. I maintain, however, that had this man persevered, he would have finally succeeded. He would have eventually mastered the mechanical knowledge which he utterly lacked and probably he would also have learned to modify his too boisterous and familiar manner which jarred upon his feminine prospects.

"I have had men on my own staff who were not adaptable merely because they thought they weren't. One man, a successful paper-and-twine salesman, accustomed to soliciting the business of small tradesmen, was allotted a territory in which he met bankers, executives of large concerns, professional men, etc. He failed to make good. Apparently, when confronted with men of this caliber, he lacked confidence. I switched him to a field similar to that he had formerly covered, and he promptly scored a hit. But here again the man's own mental attitude explained his failure in an unaccustomed environment. Had I given him time he might have found himself."

Paying Salesmen What They're Worth

"When I became sales manager of this concern," said an executive, "the sales force was paid on a straight salary

SALES MANAGEMENT

basis. A careful analysis of the sales records for some months past revealed the fact that some were overpaid and others underpaid, figuring over- and under-payment in relation to the average sales expense.

“Furthermore, some of those turning in a large volume of sales and receiving moderate salaries were overpaid, because, by cutting prices and maintaining heavy expense accounts, the net profit on their efforts was slight.

““Why not organize this department on an equitable basis whereby each man receives full value for all he accomplishes and nothing for what he doesn't accomplish?” I reflected.

“I evolved a plan whereby each man was to receive 10 per cent. of the gross profit on all sales to regular customers, and 15 per cent. on those to new customers. Traveling expenses were to be allowed by the house. Then I reapportioned territories so that each man would have an equal opportunity. After securing permission to inaugurate the change, I called in the salesmen and explained the new plan.

“I pointed out the fact that it set no limit to a man's earning capacity and that it meant that his job was safe in hard times as well as good. The men were favorably impressed. Pay-checks were discontinued, but a certain sum was put to the credit of each man, upon which he could draw; this sum to be repaid from his commissions.

“The results were soon apparent. By the end of the second month every man was making more money than he had been previously and our sales expense was less. In other words, the men were working harder, to their own profit and to ours.

“The year's figures showed that we had netted about 12 per cent. more than during the previous twelvemonth, despite the fact that we had paid out considerably more in

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

commissions than we ever had in salaries. Increased sales due to increased effort explained the improvement."

Daily Reports from Traveling Men

"Salesmen will always send in their orders," said the proprietor of a wholesale house, "but it is difficult to get any further information from them. In writing letters, they are likely to omit essential points. I finally devised a simple plan which has proved entirely practicable.

"In starting upon a trip, each of my men is now equipped with cards, one for each town visited. One column is occupied by the names of the firms on which he is to call and several spaces are left blank for the insertion of the names of any additional concerns the salesman may discover.

"A parallel column is marked 'Information,' and in it the salesman writes anything which he deems of value. Comment may range from overstocked—we refuse him credit—buys only from Gray Co.—claims we refused to make shortage good (Harkins has story)—to the welcome, sold (see inclosed order). And all these data are valuable in conducting direct mail campaigns and in priming the salesman for future trips.

"A third column is devoted to an itemized expense account, and a fourth to data regarding general business conditions in the town covered. At the bottom are two lines which read:

Total of Orders Taken.....
Total Expenses.....

"I think that these items have a good psychological effect in acting as a spur to renewed efforts on the following day; this in case the difference between the two totals is not large enough to be satisfactory.

SALES MANAGEMENT

“It requires but a moment to fill out one of these cards; they give all the requisite information. It saves the salesman’s time, and we find that the salesmen never fail to mail them nightly. They are filed in our main office and kept until replaced by a duplicate the next time the territory is covered.”

A Policy of Preparedness Contributes to the Stability of this Business

“Many employers regard it as a personal affront when a former salesman, who has established close contact with his customers, carries their business to a competing house,” said the proprietor of a big wholesale concern.

“Having once been a salesman myself, I cannot agree with this attitude. A salesman is entitled to all he can take; an employer to all he can hold.

“But as far as is practicable, I seek to subordinate the salesman’s influence to that of the house. As my sales manager owns stock in the concern, I feel pretty safe regarding his retention. Consequently I see that he spends about two days a week in the field. This serves to identify the customer with the house rather than with the salesman.

“In case a salesman leaves I concentrate upon his territory. ‘Phone calls which come in for him I promptly have referred to me. This gives me an opportunity to make an effort to hold the customer. The new salesman and the sales manager cover the former man’s territory together for the first week or two after the change.

“In the case of heavy purchasers I myself often appear upon the scene. But the main point is to pursue a permanent policy of preparedness; to seek to have the sales manager’s personality count as strongly with the customers as the salesman’s. Then you can feel that you are not com-

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

pletely at the mercy of your staff; that your business is stable and permanent."

Putting Outside Salesmen on Their Mettle

"There are many methods of getting the maximum of effort from inside employees," said the sales manager of a wholesale house. "The piece-work basis of payment, for example. But the outside salesman presents a different problem. Selling is hard, laborious work, very exhausting to one's vitality and nervous energy. Consequently, many outside salesmen are inclined to soldier occasionally—call it a day at about three P.M. and take in a movie. And how is the sales manager to know when this occurs? The length of interviews varies so much that a mere report of calls paid presents no infallible test of a man's effort. Without some additional incentive, most salesmen remain but sixty or seventy per cent. efficient. So long as their volume of sales bears a reasonable relation to their salaries, they feel sure of their positions and are likely to relax.

"Feeling that my staff of fifteen men required gingering up, I offered a fifty-dollar watch, suitably inscribed, for the greatest increase in sales during the next sixty days; the second prize was a handsome fob; the third, a cravat-pin.

"A chart was affixed to the wall and each man's percentage of increase entered each day.

"The response was surprising. Sales began to increase from an average of two thousand dollars a day to two or three hundred dollars in excess of that. By the end of three weeks we were averaging twenty-five hundred dollars a day. This meant that each man's sales had increased about thirty dollars daily. My conclusion was that they were calling upon perhaps a dozen additional customers.

SALES MANAGEMENT

In other words, less time was spent in yarning over the counter, and the men were working right up to five o'clock instead of knocking off at three-thirty.

"As the contest neared a conclusion the excitement was intense. On the last day, one man, who had ranked fourth, brought in a big order which he had held in reserve and won the watch.

"Later we devised a plan for preventing tactics of this type. The result was that, although a reaction followed the contest, we never slumped to our former level.

"Another contest, this time for a week's vacation at full pay, inaugurated a couple of months later, resulted in very satisfactory returns. The percentage of gain was not so great as previously. This was because the first contest had stimulated the men close to their maximum of efficiency. But it served to hold them up to this maximum.

"Now I make it a practice to hold two or three contests every year, varying the rewards. The effect is good on the men and it's particularly good on our sales totals."

Modern Practice in Sales Management

"Although the past decade has witnessed a great advance in direct advertising—in other words, advertising through the mail," remarked an aggressive sales manager, "even to-day there are many houses which depend entirely upon their personal sales force to increase their business. I do not for one moment advocate the abolition of salesmen. There are but few lines of business which can dispense with them. But I do criticize the concerns which fail to aid their salesmen's efforts through mailing campaigns.

"Without the mail a great deal of the salesman's time is devoted to expensive missionary work. But with the aid of the mail he can devote the major portion of his efforts

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

to the infinitely more profitable business of closing sales—taking orders from partially convinced prospects.

“This whole subject of sales management is, in many cases, conducted in a haphazard fashion which would not be tolerated for one moment in the productive end of a business.

“For example, ask a sales manager what proportion of possible prospects a certain salesman is selling in his territory. Often he can't answer, because he doesn't know. When I took this position, which involves the management of a corps of salesmen who sell to retailers, I promptly compiled lists of possible customers, segregated by the men's territories. I easily secured the names from the mercantile agency records. Then I compared these lists with the customers on our books.

“The findings were extremely illuminating. It transpired that while Jones, for instance, had corralled 70 per cent. of the possible customers of his territory, Brown had secured but 40 per cent. in his. And yet Brown's total volume of sales might exceed that of Jones. This meant, of course, that Brown had too large a field for one salesman profitably to cover. A drastic readjustment of territories immediately followed.

“Another vital point: what proportion of the total consumption of your product are you selling in your field? And what proportion is each salesman selling in his territory? Not one sales manager in twenty can answer this. Yet the figures are available in many lines, and the conclusions are valuable.

“Too often the standard of possible achievement in sales is set by the star salesman of your particular organization. And yet he may be a top-notch in comparison with the rest of your force, but inefficient in comparison with those of your competitors or in comparison with that you might

SALES MANAGEMENT

obtain. A study of the figures secured by the test of total consumption will throw light on this question. I know one sales manager who discovered by this test that his entire staff was inefficient, and, as a result, he gradually weeded out the whole force, replacing them by new blood.

“Too many business men assume that a good man doesn’t require ‘managing.’ As a matter of fact, we all require it. I wish I had some one to manage me. But management must be very tactfully applied. I don’t try to drive my men; I seek to lead them. And a good man will respond to extra incentives tactfully applied.

“Contests of all sorts for salesmen are great business stimulators. But don’t conduct them too often and don’t have the length of time they continue too extended. An annual prize, for instance, is generally of little value. The prize is too far distant. It requires too much sustained effort. But a contest covering a month or even two months will yield good results. We all have greater working capacity than we think we have. Able management develops this excess power.”

A Manual Which Created an All-star Aggregation of Salesmen

Management to a sales force is the equivalent of coaching to a football team. An able coach can turn out a winning team from mediocre material; an able sales manager can create an aggressive, resultful organization out of men of very ordinary ability. It is pretty generally conceded that one of the ablest sales organizations in the United States, if not the ablest, is that of the National Cash Register Company, of Dayton, Ohio. In just one phrase, sales management, lies the secret of this concern’s remarkable showing in the selling field. The raw material of the N. C. R. staff was

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

no better than that of scores of similar concerns. But through management an all-star aggregation has been developed.

One of the fundamental planks in the N. C. R. sales structure is a little red leather-bound, fifty-five-page volume entitled, *Instructions to N. C. R. Salesmen*. These are distributed only to members of the organization, but through the kindness of the sales manager a copy has come to the writer's desk. Although the problems confronting the distributors of various products differ in detail, they resemble one another in fundamentals. Hence, certain principles contained in this little book are of value to every salesman or sales manager in America.

The manual opens as follows:

This book gives the selling methods used by our most successful salesmen. The subjects are arranged under five headings:

1. N. C. R. Salesmanship.
2. Weak Points of Business System.
3. The Three Steps in the Sale—Interview, Explanation, Closing.
4. Selling Points.
5. Installing the Register.

Then follows some sound advice of a general nature regarding the importance of industry, tact, resourcefulness, enthusiasm, and a thorough knowledge of the product handled, ending with:

A SALESMAN MAY FAIL

Because:

He does not take the proper care of his health.

He lacks tact.

He is careless in his dress.

He lacks enthusiasm and earnestness.

He lacks dignity.

— He becomes too familiar or friendly with his P. P.'s.

SALES MANAGEMENT

He does not use advertising-matter properly.

His office is not properly arranged or his samples not properly displayed.

He does not use information and arguments published in the *N. C. R. Weekly* and in our advertising-matter.

He does not send out circular letters and advertising-matter to his P. P.'s.

He does not carry samples on the road.

He does not study the latest and most up-to-date methods of selling.

He will not adopt new ideas and suggestions.

Next come valuable data under such headings as these:

How to Operate an N. C. R. Territory.

Work Your Field Closely.

An Enthusiastic User the Best Advertisement.

Are You Doing Too Much Office Work?

Value of an Assistant.

Samples.

Advertising-matter and Supplies.

How to Fit up a Hotel Room.

Personal Appearance.

Your Manner.

This brings us to the second chapter—"Weak Points of Business Systems." Under this appear no less than one hundred and fifty-two itemized convincing objections to all methods of handling sales other than that of the cash-register system.

Probably no individual salesman could ever have evolved this number of talking-points from his own experience.

Then follows a chapter dealing with the installation of the machine and the service to be rendered a merchant after he has purchased. The sales manager of this company attributes its phenomenal success more to this manual

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

than to any other single factor. Any concern employing a corps of outside salesmen would do well to compile a similar volume and insist upon its thorough comprehension by the sales force.

It means the substitution of the one best method for scores of faulty ones; it means the triumph of scientific order over individualistic chaos; it stands for the power of a disciplined regiment over a disorderly mob; it means increased sales without increased expense.

By the issuance of the manual and the insistence upon every salesman's thoroughly mastering it during his six weeks' course at the company's school of salesmanship, each member of the sales staff profits by the combined experience of hundreds of salesmen.

Following this chapter comes: "The Three Steps in the Sale: Interview, Explanation, Closing." This chapter, together with that on selling-points, covers thirty-six pages packed solid with strong sales pointers. Most of these apply only to cash registers, but some of those of a more general character are quoted below:

The Interview.

The object of an interview is to get the merchant to investigate the register which you know his business should have.

Overcome the merchant's objections, not by arguing, but by reasoning. Many times a salesman has won an argument at the expense of the order.

Always know the name of the proprietor before you enter the store.

Securing the Attention of the Merchant.

The attention of the merchant can be secured by telling him that the object of your visit is to explain a method of conducting his business which will make him more money.

Under no circumstances talk to a merchant who will not give

SALES MANAGEMENT

you his attention. The proposition you have to offer is of such importance that it should not be treated lightly.

If you attempt to talk to a man who is working at his desk or waiting on customers, you cannot make much of an impression.

Do not proceed on the theory that storekeepers know what their best interests are. Many merchants are doing things contrary to their own interests every day.

Do not assume that a merchant is familiar with cash registers. Do not allow him to sidetrack you by the statement that he knows all about cash registers. If he did he would be using one. Let the merchant understand that the object of your visit is to explain how a National Cash Register will help him make more profit.

Concentrate on a Few Reasons.

Many salesmen say too much during the interview. They give the merchant too many reasons why he should investigate a National Cash Register. They do not concentrate on a few good reasons which will appeal to him, and, when they leave, the merchant remembers little of what has been said.

A Prize Offer to the Sales Force Elicits Many Practicable Ideas

"It's a theory of mine," remarked a well-known manufacturer, "that few of us are more than 60 per cent. efficient—that is, judged by a standard of our potential efficiency.

"And still further, I'm inclined to think that many organizations are relatively inefficient because little or no effort is made to develop the latent powers of each and every individual comprising the institution.

"I, personally, am always glad to receive suggestions from any source. Often a man whose duties are in no degree similar to mine can, because of the freshness of his attitude, the difference of his angle of vision, proffer suggestions of great practical value.

"A few weeks ago I remarked to my sales manager that

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

it seemed to me that it would be a good idea to sound our sales force for suggestions regarding increasing the efficiency of the sales and advertising end of our business. 'Why not offer a prize for the best letter?' I added. 'This will stimulate our salesmen along lines to which they ordinarily pay little attention—our sales policy as a whole. By causing them to concentrate on the problem it should increase their efficiency, and, if any practicable plans are presented, it will increase the efficiency of the entire distributing arm of the business.'

"The prize was offered, explicit instructions being included in the announcement, and the result awaited with interest.

"Hardly a letter was received but that contained at least one practicable suggestion. Many contained several. To say that the application of all the practicable ideas will save us thousands annually is a conservative statement.

"Now we are contemplating the adaptation of this idea of prize contests for suggestions to other branches of the business—the office force, the factory, etc. Concentration of many alert minds upon a problem naturally yields good results. I wonder that we have not adopted this policy before."

"Don't Oversell a Customer," says this Sales Manager

"I have just been investigating your sales during your first month with us," said Greenleaf, the sales manager, to Steele, the new salesman.

"Your sales total as much in your first thirty days as your predecessor's did in the same period. And he had worked that territory for five years."

Steele smiled with gratification.

"If you show the same results next month," continued the speaker, "we'll have to let you go. You have deliberately and consistently oversold every man who would yield

SALES MANAGEMENT

to your canvass. I don't know how you did it. I suppose you gave them some phony talk regarding an imminent increase in prices. Although your sales equal Bennett's, your number of customers sold is about 50 per cent. less.

"You have traded on the reputation of this concern for square dealing and have done us incalculable damage. The shelves of our customers will be glutted with our product for months to come. Many will refuse to deal with us further. As you are working on a straight salary, I can't fathom your motive. Probably you wanted to clinch your hold on your job and thought that a good initial month would achieve this result.

"Now we're going to give you one more chance. More sales and smaller ones, that's what we expect from you. You know when you're overselling a man just as well as we do. Any more signs of this tendency and we'll have to part company."

Different Salesmen for Different Commodities

"Different commodities demand different types of salesmen," said a sales manager. "It is a mistake to suppose that because a man can sell some things, he can sell everything. A man might sell cash registers successfully and be unable to sell bonds, and *vice versa*.

"Take our line—wholesale groceries—that requires a man who can go back over the same territory month after month and gradually build and hold patronage. Character and personality count for a great deal in work of this sort.

"In other lines, where, after the sale is once made, no further business is expected, a quite different type might succeed better. I have seen successful stock salesmen, for example, who could talk a man out of his last dollar. But this was because of wonderful eloquence and the gift of

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

delivering a convincing canvass. Often, however, salesmen of this type would fail if called upon to build a steady clientele. Many of them can inspire confidence at first, but don't wear well.

"Then, too, some men are particularly successful in selling to the opposite sex, but not notably so in selling to men. To sell to women requires an especially tactful and courteous manner. And, as a rule, I think women buyers are more influenced by the salesman's personality and less by the merit of the article than are men. At least this is true when they are purchasing something with the actual value of which they are not very familiar, such as automobiles, houses, etc.

"I know one man who found it difficult to sell automobiles to men, but who scored a striking success with women. He claimed that in the latter case he didn't try to sell the machine, but concentrated upon selling himself. In other words, he sought to inspire confidence in his own honesty and judgment. This once achieved, the prospect bought on the strength of his advice and assurance of the article's merit.

"Some salesmen get cold feet when confronted with a bigger deal than they've been accustomed to handle. A real-estate man once told me that his great difficulty was to induce his staff of salesmen to think in big enough figures. They could sell a ten-thousand-dollar house with ease and confidence, but when confronted by a one-hundred-thousand-dollar down-town proposition were likely to get buck fever and think it was beyond their depth.

"As a rule, I think that the more a salesman thinks about the article he's selling and his prospect's need of it, and the less he thinks about himself, the greater will be his success. Self-consciousness is a great drawback to salesmanship. It makes for constraint and robs the salesman's arguments of

SALES MANAGEMENT

their force. That is why the majority of successful salesmen work not from a memorized canvass, but prefer to deliver an extemporaneous talk."

A Sales Campaign

"It is very difficult to define the modern efficiency movement in a single paragraph," remarked an expert. "One phase of it, to be sure, is a closer attention to detail than has previously been exerted. But to define it as a study of details is assuredly inadequate. Systematic planning, intensive education of the workers, a scientific system of payment, adequate equipment, straight-line progress of work in process—all these and a score more phrases help to throw light upon the new science. And yet every day some radical reform or improvement is made which is not covered by terms previously used. Broadly speaking, efficiency is an idea, an attitude of mind. It is the substitution of systematic, carefully considered methods for those which are haphazard and rule-o'-thumb.

"Here is an example of the old and the new methods in sales management. A certain old-school manufacturer put a time-saving office device upon the market. He proceeded along the orthodox lines of his traditions—advertised for agents, exerted no discrimination in selection, turned a horde loose on a commission basis, 50 per cent. when the order was received, the balance when it was paid for, and sat back to await returns.

"'Returns' was right. The agents put a machine in on trial, whether or not the prospect needed it, collected half the commission, and passed on to the next. Upon checking up at the end of two months, it developed that for every seven machines sold, five were returned, with the result that the selling cost equaled the gross sales.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

“A sales manager equipped with modern efficiency ideas was secured. He promptly fired most of the agents and proceeded to hire a new crew, selecting them only after a careful study of their records. Thus he started with good timber. Next he carefully trained them as to how to demonstrate and sell the device. Following this, he apportioned each man a territory on the basis of number of possible prospects; appointed district managers, and set a weekly minimum volume of sales which a man had to meet to hold his job.

“The campaign promptly began to show results, and within a short time a good balance began to roll up on the right side of the ledger.”

Salaries or Commissions for Salesmen

“Some concerns pay their traveling men a straight salary and others a straight commission,” remarked a sales manager. “There are serious objections to either plan. The perpetual incentive involved in the commission basis is lacking in the case of straight salary. That’s enough to condemn the latter without further consideration. It’s not in human nature to work as hard on an outside job on a salary as on a commission.

“But straight commissions, too, possess their drawbacks. Suppose a man closes an exceptionally big order. He may loaf for a week on the strength of it. If he were a salaried man, a sense of duty would prevent this. Furthermore, the man working solely on commission does not feel himself a part of the organization—there is no *esprit de corps*—the concern loses the tremendous financial advantage accruing from that feeling of loyalty which is shared by most worthwhile employees.

“Furthermore, the commission payment means that the

SALES MANAGEMENT

salesman thinks chiefly of volume rather than of net profits, and he is inclined to sell many poor risks. And, finally, you cannot ask him to do occasional research, reportorial, or collection work. Figures prove, too, that commission salesmen shift jobs more often than the salaried men. And often they carry good accounts with them. They resent supervision and instructions from the main office. They feel that they are in business solely for themselves. The straight-commission plan is no more scientific than the straight-salary.

“In a word, the salary system puts too much responsibility on the house and too little on the salesman. The commission system puts too much on the salesman and too little on the house. How to secure the virtues of both plans and the faults of neither?

“To pay a salary, expenses, and a bonus on all business over a specified amount is pretty nearly the ideal plan. The bonus supplies that incentive for eight-thirty A.M. calls which is lacking in the straight-salary plan.

“Tie to this a clause offering the salesman a half of all he saves in expenses, the latter figure to be established by a study of the concern's records, and you have a sound, scientific method of remuneration.

“Test it on every point. Every advantage of straight salary is there—every advantage of straight commissions, and none of the drawbacks of either. We've been applying it for several years, and it makes for efficiency in the sales department.”

Supplementing Salesmen's Efforts Through the Mail

“Until we made a determined effort to build our mail-order business, we never realized how much trade we were losing,” said the sales manager of a large wholesale house.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

"We had always assumed that our big force of traveling salesmen, over one hundred and fifty of them, covered the field thoroughly. Now we know that many an order was placed elsewhere between the salesmen's visits.

"Our aggressive campaign for mail orders has achieved several good results. Not only has it increased our gross sales over 25 per cent., but it has added stability to our business—centralized it at the home office and weakened the salesman's personal control of a territory.

"It was nearly two years ago that we concluded to make a systematic effort to build this branch. In common with our competitors, we had for some years issued an annual catalogue for distribution among the retailers. The problem was to make them refer to it; to have it assume the position of a personal representative permanently stationed in their stores.

"We began by issuing a new catalogue; one modeled on the lines of those of the big retail mail-order houses, with every device included for making easy the placing of orders. Perforated pages of post-cards were bound in the book; sheaves of order-blanks were included.

"Then we assailed the problem of securing the co-operation of our salesmen. We explained that our plan was to obtain more sales from each customer, and that this logically would increase the commissions of each man.

"'Between calls, your customers are inclined to place orders with competitors,' we argued. 'Persuade them to use the catalogue, and you'll find many commissions credited to you for orders you never worked for.' This made a strong impression.

"Next we staged a salesman's contest designed to stimulate mail orders. We offered cash prizes for the men who persuaded their trade to increase their mail orders the greatest proportion during a stated period. As another contest covering total sales was run simultaneously, the

SALES MANAGEMENT

temptation to have legitimate personal orders sent through the mail was removed.

“At the same time, we covered our customers through the mail. Letters, folders, and mailing-cards embodied a series of arguments for the use of our catalogue.

“‘Suppose a customer asks for a certain article your supply of which is exhausted,’ was one of the points we made. ‘Don’t say you’re out and let a good customer escape. Consult our catalogue with him and send your order in the next mail.’

“Every ten days we used the mail to feature one advantage or another of catalogue buying.

“Within a couple of months we were hiring more clerks to handle our mail-order business. The end of the year showed an increase in our business of over 25 per cent., most of which was attributable to mail orders from regular customers. In other words, the gain was due not to adding new names to our books, but to securing a larger proportion of the business of our old customers.

“Thousands of concerns similarly situated could adopt this idea to their profit. Too many old-established houses with good sales staffs depend too much upon personal contact. To supplement it with a catalogue and mailing campaigns means more business.”

A Simple Idea Which Increased this Concern's Business 50 Per Cent.

“A good salesman is, as a rule, a poor detail man,” said a sales manager. “And it’s a study of detail which enables a man to lay out a practicable and efficient routing schedule. Not one salesman in a hundred really plans his trips scientifically and intelligently. As a result, time is lost in the course of a month, aggregating entire days, waiting for trains.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

“About a year ago I hired a railroad clerk to come in here and route our salesmen. Together we surveyed the field, estimated the number of calls to be made in a town, the average length of time required per call, and then we routed our salesmen according to an inflexible schedule designed to absolutely eliminate all time lost in waiting for trains. How the men kicked! Two resigned. The rest concluded to give the plan a trial, and when they saw the extra commissions they were accumulating, they became enthusiastic converts.

“Now I can lay my finger on a man at any hour of any day, even though he be several states distant. The men make 50 per cent. more calls in the same period of time than formerly, and their sales have increased in almost exactly that ratio.”

Holding Customers in Line

“There are too many salesmen whose idea is to work hard for a few months,” said a sales manager, “develop a profitable clientele, and then to spend the balance of their lives in serving as order-takers to this group of customers. They call this ‘holding their customers in line.’

“Now my idea is that it’s the business of the sales manager to hold the customers in line, and that the salesman’s job is, primarily, to keep hammering away on new customers.

“Of course, for a salesman to utterly neglect his customers after once securing an order would be suicidal. But, at the same time, it shouldn’t be necessary for him to devote all his time to catering to old customers’ needs.

“When I first took this position I found this weakness particularly conspicuous among the city salesmen. Some of them actually didn’t solicit a new account once a week. But they appeared to be busy, and their sales were satisfactory in volume.

SALES MANAGEMENT

“A simple expedient cured the difficulty. I changed the basis of payment from straight salary to a commission and bonus-on-new-business plan. At the same time I inaugurated certain policies which tended to link our established trade closer to my desk, eliminating salesmen as intermediaries. The mail, the telephone, and personal calls effected this reform.

“One salesman resigned. He had been loafing for so many years that he couldn't face the thought of real work. The others stuck with us, and soon found themselves earning on an average of 20 per cent. more than previously. But to do it they worked twice as hard and were three or four times as profitable to the house.

“To-day they look upon me as a benefactor. As one of them once confessed, ‘If something hadn't occurred to stir us up, we'd have rusted out and, in the event of a change, found ourselves incapable of earning a living.’”

V

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

Retail Salesmanship as a Profession

"My wife came down-town to lunch with me the other day," remarked a prominent local insurance man, "and afterward, as we strolled along the sidewalk, her eye was attracted by a display of coats in the window of a big apparel-store.

"Like most men, I feel very ill at ease in a woman's store, but before I realized it I found myself corralled as adviser in an impending sale. As we entered the department, the floorman approached, learned our errand, and turned us over to a salesgirl.

"I had sold a lot of insurance in my younger days and right now I have a big corps of agents to handle. Consequently salesmanship in all its branches always engages my interest.

"Well, I witnessed an artistic performance. That girl's technique was a pleasure to observe. About four questions sufficed to post her on my wife's size, price limit, and preference as regards style and color. Then came the exhibit of the merchandise. When the customer expressed doubts as to the durability of the lining, the saleswoman explained that it was rigidly guaranteed, and then went on to tell why they were able to guarantee it.

"Next came the question of fast color, and here again

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

came a talk on dyes and dyeing processes which could not fail to convince one that she knew what she was talking about. She rapidly narrowed my wife's choice down to three models, and then, noting her hesitation in deciding, gently but firmly concentrated her efforts on one, enlisting my support in convincing her that it was particularly becoming. It required less than fifteen minutes from our entrance to close the sale.

“‘How did you learn to sell so well?’ I inquired. ‘I’m interested in salesmanship and studied your performance. You know your goods from A to Z, and human nature as well.’

“‘Why, we girls are all thoroughly grounded in salesmanship,’ was the reply. ‘I took a three months’ course at Mrs. Prince’s school, at the Women’s Educational and Industrial Union in Boston. And right here in the store we have an instructor who took a two years’ course in the teachers’ department of the same school. Every now and then we hold demonstration sales; that is, one of us impersonates a customer, another is selected to act as saleswoman, and then, before an audience of our fellow-workers, the two clash.

“‘A vote decides as to which is the victor. By that I mean as to whether or not the sale is made. Then the sale is subjected to criticism from start to finish. It’s very interesting and we learn a great deal. Over thirty of the country’s big department and specialty stores now have instructors from Mrs. Prince’s school and many high schools have courses conducted by graduates of the Boston school.

“‘Before I became interested in selling as a real profession I used to hate the work. I felt somehow that it was beneath me and used to look forward to getting out of it some day. But now I enjoy every minute of the day; it’s a real pleasure to feel that every customer who approaches offers you an

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

opportunity to bring to bear upon the problem of making the sale some consciously gained experience and training.'

"So now I'm holding demonstration sales every Saturday among my own men," concluded the speaker, "and the results are already apparent in their earnings."

Practical Salesmanship

"A good deal of practical psychology enters into selling suits of clothes," said a retail clothing salesman. "I sell a far greater proportion of prospects than I did ten years ago when I was new at the game. And, furthermore, I make a sale in about a third the time.

"I used to make the mistake of pulling out every style and pattern we had in stock. Even though the customer seemed pleased with the second or third suit submitted, I would keep producing still more models. I was proud of our comprehensive stock and enjoyed displaying it. But I soon realized that this was a poor policy. Not only did it consume unnecessary time, but it prevented the concentration of the buyer's attention upon one particular pattern. Often he became so doubtful regarding a choice that his first enthusiasm waned and he would finally conclude to 'look elsewhere.'

"Now, if the customer seems pleased with the second or third suit shown, I promptly concentrate on that particular model. Very subtly and tactfully I begin to exert a little gentle pressure. I get the suit on his back; indicate its superlative merits; even take it for granted that he's made his choice. Then, before he realizes it, he is being measured for alterations and the deal is closed. That this plan must be applied with great discretion goes without saying. The customer must not feel rushed; this would be fatal. Some positive, decided characters are not amenable to such tactics.

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

I give them a free rein. But the average man dislikes the bother of pottering about to select a suit. He is really glad to have the salesman assume some of the responsibility of the choice. Often I have a sale closed within ten minutes of the customer's entrance. It saves time; it means that I have scored my point before the prospect's interest has begun to flag; it is efficient salesmanship."

The Technique of Inside Salesmanship

"I've worked both as outside and inside salesman," said a clothier's clerk to a new and inexperienced employee, "and my conclusion is that the technique of inside selling is more easily grasped than that of outside. In other words, the proper tactics to pursue in closing a customer can be more readily reduced to rules and formulæ than in outside work. This, no doubt, is because the factors involved tend to remain more constant. The entire transaction is less complex. Often, in outside work, half the battle is in securing the interview. But in store selling, that obstacle does not exist.

"Now I noticed that when your last customer approached, you didn't open correctly. You began to show him our stock without first learning his preconceived ideas. That is a mistake. The more you can narrow a man's choice, the nearer you are to closing. It finally developed that he wanted a blue suit, but objected to serge for fear of its wearing shiny. If, when he entered, you had inquired as to just what he had in mind, you could have steered him directly to the blue worsteds or cheviots and avoided the danger of having the buying impulse slacken while he pored over those grays and mixed goods. Furthermore, you'd have saved ten minutes' time and that often means a ten-dollar profit.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

“Another point, always get the tape on the customer at once. This will enable you to avoid showing him patterns in which we are not stocked in his size.

“Then, too, I noticed that when a customer came in this morning with his wife, you practically ignored her. That is a fatal error. Always make a bid for the support of the customer's companion, whether it be wife or male friend. It often results in closing an otherwise doubtful sale, and in the latter case, is likely to add a new customer to our books.

“After the transaction is completed, don't say, ‘Anything more you need?’

“Mention some specific article, emphasizing the fact that it is a particularly desirable moment to purchase. If the man has bought a suit, mention overcoats, and *vice versa*. And give a reason—either some new goods are in, or the values are unusual, or the price has been reduced.

“We spend lots of money in the newspapers to get customers in here. Be sure that they purchase all that they need while they're here.”

Selling by Intuition

“You've seen these men at the beaches who'll guess your weight,” said the proprietor of a clothing-store. “Ninety-nine times out of a hundred they'll strike it right. Similarly, as a rule, a hotel clerk sizes up his man correctly when he says: ‘Something about four dollars?’ and you nod your head—‘or five dollars, six dollars, or seven dollars,’ as the case may be.

“This uncanny keenness of perception cannot be acquired by every one. But my best salesman, Holmes, has it.

“When a man says, ‘Something about twenty dollars,’ he knows whether he means that irrevocably or whether or not he can raise him to thirty dollars.

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

“To seek to boost a twenty-dollar man to thirty dollars is to run the risk of offending the customer and losing not only that sale, but future sales. To let a thirty-dollar man escape with a twenty-dollar purchase, however, is opposed to all the rules of common sense.

“‘How do you size ‘em up?’ I’ve often asked Holmes.

“‘I don’t know,’ he replies. ‘It’s partly observation and partly intuition. But I’ve never yet made a serious mistake.’”

Tact—the Salesman’s Great Asset

In one of his short stories Kipling tells about a bank cashier in India who seemingly possessed a double personality—one for business hours, the other for his period of recreation.

“Enter Jones’s bank,” said the writer, “and though Jones would recognize you, you wouldn’t recognize Jones.”

Here is an account of an American who possessed similar chameleon-like propensities.

It was at the cigar-stand in the lobby of a large office-building. “So you’ve built this business to the point where it nets you sixty dollars a week,” I remarked to the proprietor, a young man whose sales methods I’d been observing for some time. “That’s a remarkable record for so small an investment. To what factor do you attribute your unusual showing?”

“Why, I don’t know,” was the reply. “I always greet my customers with a smile and seek to avoid arguments. I suppose that policy helps my sales.”

“Hello, Bergh!” said an elderly man of benign aspect, who approached at this moment. “Guess I’ll have a smoke. Give me a package of Pell Mells,” and he tendered a coin.

“Pell Mells it is,” replied Bergh, producing a box.

“Stirring times, these,” continued the customer, indicating the head-lines of the newspaper he carried. “That

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

second message of Bryan's to the people strikes me as being the greatest public utterance ever delivered in this country. It marks the dawn of a new era. For the first time in our history, a man in public life has directly and practically applied the eternal verities of the Christian religion to the affairs of this mundane sphere. I've never been a supporter of Bryan's, but from this time on he gets my vote."

"Yes," replied Bergh, "it's a wonderfully significant document. A great man, Mr. William Jennings Bryan," and the customer, lighting a cigarette, entered the elevator.

"Good morning, Bergh!" remarked a middle-aged man who approached at this moment. He looked like a lawyer. "How about some Pawl Mawls this morning?"

"Here they are, sir, Pawl Mawls," replied Bergh, tendering a box in exchange for a coin. The purchaser lighted one.

"Well, I see Bryan is trying to mix religion with politics," remarked the customer, glancing at the paper he carried. "'Twould be fine if the world could be run according to his Tolstoian ideas. Perhaps it will be some day. But to-day is no time for experiments with such visionary ideals. We need a strong man in Bryan's position—not an impracticable idealist. Still, I confess that I admire his moral courage and respect his principles."

"Yes," agreed the cigar-man. "Personally a fine character, but out of place in the Cabinet." And the lawyer entered the elevator.

Just then a young man approached. A vigorous, aggressive-appearing chap, he looked like a successful salesman or insurance-solicitor. A phrenologist would have called him a motor rather than a mental type.

"Hello, Bergh, old scout!" was his greeting. "Give me some Pall Malls."

"Here you are, Pall Malls," was Bergh's response, and he proffered a box.

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

"Well, I see that old foggy, Bryan, has made a fool of himself again," remarked the customer, emphatically. "He belongs in the old women's home. Springing his sanctimonious guff on every occasion. I suppose he's trying to double-cross Wilson and get the long-hair vote. But that kind of drivel won't go with the American people. If I had my way I'd tar and feather him."

"Yes, it's a good thing he's out of public life," replied Bergh, imperturbably. "Let's hope he never emerges into the limelight again." And the customer boarded the elevator.

"Bergh," said I, "what is the proper pronunciation for P-A-L-L M-A-L-L and what is your honest opinion of Bryan's attitude?"

"Come around after six o'clock when I'm off duty and I'll tell you," replied the cigar-man, with a laugh. "Right now my business is to sell tobacco, not to air my personal views on the English language and current events."

And that's all the satisfaction I got out of Bergh.

Present-day Selling Ethics

"There are still many old-fashioned salesmen who consider an active imagination the principal requisite for closing sales," remarked a local business man, recently.

"But there has been a vast change for the better in this regard during the past fifty years. Commercial ethics, particularly among retailers, have gained a higher plane.

"The other day I had occasion to purchase some furniture. I concluded to look the ground over pretty thoroughly before purchasing, with a view to getting posted on values.

"I entered a furniture-store and stated my needs, remarking that I first wished to see dining-room furniture.

"Here's a handsome table, a solid mahogany Sheraton,

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

for thirty-five dollars,' said the elderly salesman. 'There's the buffet that accompanies it, at forty-five dollars.

"I inspected the pieces carefully, taking particular note of the fit of the drawers and other details.

"Let's see something cheaper,' I finally remarked, non-committally.

"Now then, here's a beautiful mahogany table for twenty dollars,' continued the salesman, indicating another table which in the dim light looked just like the first one. 'It's a twenty-eight-dollar Sheraton pattern, but we expect a heavy shipment to arrive within a day or two and must make room for the new stock.'

"An old story,' I reflected, smiling, but I looked the table over with interest. Eight dollars seemed a heavy reduction to make for so slight a reason. But there seemed no difference between the twenty-dollar and thirty-five-dollar tables.

"My suspicions were aroused, however, by the obvious falsehood, and after the familiar mental wrestling bout to avoid the salesman's closing tactics, I escaped.

"Next I entered a large department store.

"Now if you want something which is inexpensive, but that will look well for a while, here is a whitewood table for twenty dollars, finished to look like mahogany,' said the salesman. 'It's a Sheraton pattern.'

"It was the identical model that I had been inspecting a few minutes previous as a twenty-eight-dollar mahogany table reduced to twenty dollars. Probably it came from the same factory.

"Strange,' I reflected. 'This table is whitewood—the other one, perhaps from the same tree, is mahogany.'

"But if you care to invest more money, here's a handsome table with a top of mahogany veneer for thirty-five dollars. You can get the same thing in a solid mahogany top for

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

thirty-eight dollars, but as veneer is just as durable and less likely to warp, I'd suggest the thirty-five-dollar one. The buffet is forty-five dollars,' and he indicated it.

"The thirty-five-dollar table was obviously the mate to the one which had been described as solid mahogany in the previous store. I spent perhaps a half-hour in inspecting the stock, and then announced that I was pleased with the assortment, but didn't wish to buy that day. 'I want to get thoroughly posted before investing,' I explained.

"Quite naturally,' agreed the salesman, a courteous Englishman. 'Look the whole field over and then come back at your leisure.'

"The next day I returned and purchased several hundred dollars' worth of furniture. The prices were exactly the same as at the first store I entered, and, in addition, I had the satisfaction of knowing that I was dealing with honest men in whom I could place utmost reliance.

"In other words, the place was run by modern methods with a modern policy. And modern merchandising methods do not demand a vivid imagination and Baxter Street closing tactics as necessary factors in a salesman's equipment."

The Psychology of Selling an Overcoat

"Size up your man, then follow the lines of least resistance," remarked the manager of a retail clothing establishment. "Only a few minutes ago I closed a sale of a thirty-dollar overcoat.

"One of my salesmen, Larkin, had worked on the man nearly twenty minutes. He was about to escape when Larkin signaled me for assistance.

"I grasped the situation at once. Larkin had been trying

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

to sell one of the rather noisy patterns so much in vogue this season. Now this particular customer, aged about thirty, was wearing a plain, dark-blue suit, conservatively cut, a dark tie, solid color, and a white negligée shirt.

“‘Conservatism, that’s the key-note of this man,’ thought I, ‘and he’ll fall for a quiet, conservative overcoat.’

“I led him to another rack and began to pull down some staid Oxfords with black-velvet collars.

“‘Ah! that’s more my idea!’ he exclaimed, delightedly. ‘I don’t want any of that rah! rah! stuff.’ And within five minutes he was writing out a check for thirty dollars.”

Appealing to the Unexpressed Need

“We’ve been making a concentrated effort to increase what we call ‘suggestion sales,’” said the proprietor of a big retail store. “By that I mean inducing the customer to buy something additional to the specific article the need for which prompted her to enter.

“We have found that items most easily sold by this plan are those which are in some way connected with those which she has already bought, goods which have just arrived, or articles featured in our advertising.

“With the idea of enlisting the interest of our salespeople in this plan, we have conducted contests with small cash prizes for those making the best showing. The sales force kept their own records and turned them in to the floorman nightly.

“Any sale made (1) of an additional article not inquired for; (2) of any article to a person who claimed to be ‘just looking,’ (3) of any article to a person who has said that he does not intend to buy, could be included among suggestion sales. The result was extremely satisfactory. In fact, suggestion sales finally totaled nearly five thousand a week.

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

What this meant in net profits as well as in increased earnings for our salespeople can be readily estimated."

Why this Woman is a Success at Selling

"I always try to get the customer to take the article in which she is interested in her hands," said a particularly successful saleswoman. "This always helps a sale.

"One or all of three or four reasons may explain it. It strengthens the idea of the tangibility of the article; it appeals to pride of ownership; and, by its implication of the sale's completion, it aids in closing the transaction.

"Salesmanship, both outside and inside, is truly a science, and particularly so in a store, where no effort is required for gaining an audience, and hence all the fine points involved can be carefully observed.

"Objections are often advanced, and they should be firmly but tactfully met. Often I say, 'Yes, there is something in that objection, BUT,' and then bring forward my evidence to refute the charge. It avoids the antagonism that arises from a direct contradiction.

"But all such pointers are secondary to a thorough knowledge of the goods. There's the first requisite of good salesmanship. Nothing is so fatal to the buying impulse as to find a clerk who is not posted on prices or the actual sales points of the merchandise.

To show too wide an assortment is a mistake; but to appear unwilling to offer a sufficient display to permit of intelligent comparison is even worse. Take my last sale, for instance, not ten minutes ago. A customer wanted to see some collars suitable for an elderly woman. I displayed three. I could see that one particularly pleased her. Then I casually produced four more just to let her feel that she was being shown a good assortment. That made seven,

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

I then concentrated upon the one which so obviously pleased her, and, by indicating its superiority to the others, stimulated her desire for it. When finally I slipped it about my neck and showed her how it would look when worn, the sale was closed.

“Now I might easily have shown her thirty collars. And the result would probably have been that she became so uncertain of her choice amid such an embarrassment of riches that I would have lost the sale, and even had she bought under such circumstances, it would have required five times as long to sell her.”

“Don’t Oversell a Customer,” says this Retailer

“The short-sighted policy which induces the traveling salesman to oversell the dealer has often been criticized,” remarked a prominent merchant. “And so disastrous are its final effects upon the wholesaler’s business that nowadays the mistake is seldom made.

“I believe that the same principle applies in sales made to the consumer. Too many salespeople, with an eye to increasing the day’s total, will exert pressure upon weak and undecided purchasers. This policy carried to an extreme results in harm to a concern. A customer who has been strong-armed into overbuying regrets her purchase later and feels resentful toward the house.

“The one great asset of a retailer who is in business to stay is a reputation for square dealing and a friendly attitude upon the part of the buying public. Overselling a customer does not tend to build repeat business, and repeat business is the kind that pays in the long run.

“Don’t think for a moment that I am advocating a passive attitude which will result in a possible purchaser’s leaving and buying elsewhere. If a woman is in the market

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

for an article and we have it, every legitimate effort should be made to close a sale. But I object to the over-aggressive methods pursued by some salespeople when a customer seems dissatisfied with the assortment displayed and prepares to leave without purchasing. Better to gracefully accede to the customer's desires in such a case than to back her into a corner and seek to force her to choose what seems to her the least of several evils. You may close the sale, to be sure, and it looks well in the day's total, but you've lost yourself and the house a customer who might have bought during the ensuing year ten times the amount involved in that single transaction.

"One progressive concern is so alive to the evils of over-selling that it has posted at conspicuous points about the store the following notice:

"LOOKING INCURS NO OBLIGATION TO BUY

Many customers are afraid of hurting a salesperson's feelings, and, hence, take something they do not want and often do not keep.

We much prefer that our customers say, 'I will not purchase to-day,' than to buy because the salesperson has been courteous and attentive.

Don't be afraid to say, 'No.'"

A Scientific System of Payment for Salespeople

"In the final analysis, a store's success is dependent upon its salespeople," said the manager of a great retail house. "And as the efforts of the salespeople are proffered in exchange for payment, obviously the method of payment adopted is a vital factor in a store's progress. To evolve a plan which will stimulate each employee to his or her best efforts, and which will insure loyalty and contentment—these are the objects to be achieved.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

“Some concerns pay straight wages; others, straight commissions. The objection to the first plan is that the ever-present incentive of the second method is lacking. The second method may result in too great a concentration upon mere sales, with a consequent neglect of other factors which are equally important in determining a store's final success. Alteration expenses; returns; strong-arm methods—all these undesirable corollaries are likely to accompany the straight-commission plan.

“After much study we have settled upon what is called the quota method as the most desirable. It consists of a salary plus a commission. In some departments, sales expense is necessarily higher than in others. Also there are seasonal fluctuations. The quota method allows for these factors.

“In some departments, for example, an eight-dollar-a-week salesperson is expected to sell two hundred and fifty dollars to cover her salary. On all sales over this she receives 2 per cent. commission. A nine-dollar-a-week wage implies three hundred dollars in weekly sales. The same commission on sales in excess of this applies.

“In other departments less is demanded. A woman working in women's veilings, for instance, is expected to sell but one hundred and seventy dollars per week in order to secure eight dollars in wages. And the commission on extra sales is 3 per cent.

“As seasonal fluctuations play a big part in sales expense, we refigure our quotas monthly. The method of arriving at these figures is simple in the extreme. We merely conclude what mark-up may be made, what expenses come to, what net profit must be made, what sum shall be set aside for a surplus; then the balance can go for wages.

“With this plan we combine profit-sharing. This makes for a stable force, secures the employees' support in eliminat-

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

ing waste and increasing general efficiency, and encourages them to take as great an interest in securing permanent customers as though they were members of the firm. It obviates the disadvantages contingent upon the straight-commission plan.

“Our method, as we analyze it, combines as many advantages as is possible with as few disadvantages. But we’re always hoping to improve it. It works well in actual practice. Perhaps eventually we shall evolve a better one.”

The Salesman’s Cynical Code

“One of the traits common to all people is self-satisfaction. As you view yourself in the mirror, or indulge in introspection, and are pleased with what you find, you may be able to detect one or two minor points which you grudgingly admit might be bettered, but, in the main, the ideal of the individual is his own present personality.

“Take these two facts as the guide of your conduct in salesmanship—people are naturally selfish and naturally lazy.

“What is fame? Merely getting others to say the same things about us that we already believe.

“The above quotations from an interesting book, *Retail Selling*, by James W. Fisk, might be called cynical,” said a store manager. “Cynical or not, doubtless they’re true. And the successful salesman bears them constantly in mind. The good salesman is above all things responsive; he is all things to all men—or women. As the author says elsewhere:

“You cannot be too polite in serving customers, and courtesy, which is tactful flattery, should be apparent in every move and speech. You will lose no opportunity of impressing upon the customer that he is the most important visitor you have had

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

that day, that you are anxious to please him in every respect, that your interest in his welfare is even greater than your interest in the affairs of the concern. You will do this because, if you do the things he likes, he will immediately classify you mentally as one who has the same kind of thoughts that he has, and because he regards his personal opinions as more valuable than those of any one else, he will think you a man of good judgment."

The Weakness of Straight Commissions

"At first thought, straight commissions seem an ideal form of payment," remarked a store superintendent, recently. "It puts it right up to each salesperson to make good, and supplies a tremendous incentive to effort.

"But there is a fundamental weakness in the idea. If you have five hundred salespeople working on a straight-commission basis, you have five hundred individuals who are, in principle, in business, each one for himself. The proprietors supply the stock and the roof, and collect a share of the salesman's earnings as recompense.

"This means that there is no group feeling, no sense of unity in the organization, no co-operative spirit present. It works out very badly. We found in our men's-clothing department, for example, that the clerks, in their anxiety to make sales and pocket their commissions, were inclined to take chances on the fit of a suit and often allowed customers to leave without trying on the trousers. This saved the clerk's time and left him free to tackle the next customer at once, thus increasing the former's commission.

"What was the result? Dissatisfied patrons, an over-worked alteration department, rehandling of shipments, extra delivery expense, etc. In other words, the sales force felt little interest in the success of the store as a whole. There was no particular reason why they should.

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

"A very simple device overcame this difficulty. We announced that from a certain date the salespeople in this section would receive, in addition to their commissions, a certain proportion of the sum saved monthly by their increased efforts in mark-downs and alterations. It was easy to arrive at this total sum by consulting the records of former months.

"What resulted? Instead of neglecting the less salable goods, an even pressure was exerted on the entire stock, thus lessening mark-downs. And such pains were taken to secure a good fit for each customer at the time of the sale that the burden upon the alteration department was greatly lightened. This idea is really a form of profit-sharing, but, instead of applying to the profits of the entire establishment, covers only those of the single department to which the efforts of those concerned can be directly applied."

How Much Should a Clerk Sell?

"Many interesting figures have been gathered around this subject," said a merchant. "My clerks' salaries amount to 5.80 per cent. of my total sales. But it is unfair to expect uniformity in this regard among all clerks. Such factors as the commodity handled, the location of the department, the location of the store, the establishment's reputation, and the amount of advertising done—all these should be considered.

"Six per cent. is called normal among the big stores of the great cities. But this varies much in relation to the article sold. When you allow for the fact that these stores pay an enormous rental for strategic locations, and that they advertise heavily, it is obvious that smaller stores must expect a higher salary percentage.

"Investigations covering many concerns established the following as average salary expenses in these retail lines:

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

Groceries, 7.92 per cent.; furniture-stores, 8.78 per cent.; hardware, 9.98 per cent.; shoe-stores, 10.56 per cent.; druggists, 10.96 per cent.; jewelers, 10.98 per cent.

“Naturally, if a man cuts prices his salary expense will decrease, but as his profit per sale also decreases, this may be as broad as it is long.

“One tried and tested plan for reducing salary cost and at the same time to benefit all concerned, is to install a profit-sharing plan of payment.”

Selling Retail Stock from Samples

“It was a little incident which occurred one day as I was selecting a couple of shirts in a haberdasher’s which suggested an improvement in the methods of conducting my own business,” said the manager of the laces and embroidery department in a great city store.

“A man entered, studied the glass case containing samples of collars carried in stock, indicated one, and remarked, ‘A dozen, please.’

“The clerk wrapped a box, handed it to the customer, accepted his money, and the deal was closed. The entire transaction consumed not over a couple of minutes.

“‘Now the speed of that sale resulted from the buying by sample,’ I reflected, as I walked down the street. ‘If I could rush customers through my department at a two-minute rate my clerks could handle ten times the business that they now do. I wonder if I can’t apply that sample idea to my stock?’

“It was with a critical eye that I studied the arrangement of materials when I returned to the store. The laces were wound upon cardboard and scattered about upon the counters or shelves in a rather confused fashion. Contrasted with the neat glass case of sample collars, all was chaos.

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

Time was consumed in inspecting, not samples, but the stock itself. Every sale meant, perhaps, ten minutes of pulling down, unwinding, displaying, wrapping, and re-shelving bolts of laces. And even then, the customer had not really had access to the entire stock. She may have purchased a pattern as a compromise when exactly the sort she desired was somewhere on the shelves.

“The result of my survey was the installation of a half-dozen big sample-books for counter use, which contained liberal samples of every pattern carried. The patterns were arranged according to their resemblance, and were numbered to correspond with the shelves. Thus a woman could swiftly glance through the book, ask to inspect number two hundred and thirty-four; the clerk takes out a bolt from shelf two hundred and thirty-four, and the sale is all but accomplished. This has more than doubled the sales efficiency of my clerks. In fact, each one can now wait upon a couple of customers at once. What this means in rush hours only an embroidery-man can realize.

“Next I turned my attention to embroideries. Here we had been using shelf cabinets. They were removed from the shelves, placed upon the counter, and clerk and customer pulled over an assortment of several hundred medallions in an effort to find the desired pattern. Following the choice, came the search for the stock pattern which matched it.

“Books seemed impracticable in this case, so I obtained a revolving rack, the leaves of which consisted of framed, glass-covered boards. Upon the boards I mounted the medallions. Now a customer turns the leaves of this substitute for a book, quickly and easily selects her pattern, gives the clerk the number, and the deal is closed. These two simple devices have substantially increased the sales in these two departments. Fewer clerks can wait upon more

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

customers and fewer customers leave before buying during rush hours, as used often to occur.”

This Woman Traces Her Start in Life to a Simple Suggestion

“Yes, I suppose I’m one of the highest-salaried women in the country,” said a department manager of one of New York’s largest department stores. “And my real start in life I can trace to one simple little suggestion. I had been working here as salesgirl in the hosiery department about two months, just long enough to have gained a little self-confidence, when an idea occurred to me which strongly appealed to the management.

“I was ambitious and made it a point to thoroughly familiarize myself with the store’s advertising, particularly with the day’s special offers. As I handed a purchaser her parcel, I would remark, ‘Possibly you’d be interested in the remarkable values in gloves we’re offering to-day; two-dollar-and-a-half gloves for one dollar and a half—third aisle to the right.’ Or it might be a sale of china in the basement. In a large proportion of cases the customer would thank me for the suggestion and promptly start for the department indicated.

“‘Why shouldn’t this be applied on a larger scale?’ I finally reflected. ‘We spend thousands of dollars in newspaper space for the purpose of drawing people into the store. Why can’t we induce them to spend twice as much as they intended, once we get them here? Every clerk in the store should be coached to boost the sales of other departments.’

“That evening I wrote my suggestion in the form of a letter to the general manager and mailed it anonymously, if you please.” She laughed at the recollection.

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

"A few days later I received a summons to headquarters. My identity had been discovered by my handwriting.

"The general manager quizzed me closely regarding my conclusions drawn from my own experience.

"'It's a splendid suggestion,' were his final words. 'I don't know why it has never occurred to us. Every member of our sales force of over a thousand will be notified to follow your plan, and your envelope next week will contain an acknowledgment of our appreciation. Keep your eyes open for similar chances to improve our service.'

"Well, after that, of course, I was constantly on the alert. I sent in suggestion after suggestion, and the management began to look upon me as timber for advancement. My upward climb was slow, but steady. To-day I am securely established. But my start must be attributed to that idea; so simple and obvious that no one had ever thought of it."

A Perpetual Incentive for Salesmen

"When I joined this organization," said the manager of a retail store of medium size, "I found the following system of payment applied. Each salesman was assumed to make a certain proportionate increase in sales annually. In case he achieved this increase, his salary was raised one hundred and twenty-five dollars per year. As it worked out, many of the men attained this additional volume by September or October.

"This suggested an idea to me which was confirmed by our analysis of the monthly individual sales records for a series of years. The sales of the men whose records showed that by autumn they felt sure of their usual increase betrayed a cessation of effort during the final two or three months of the year. Satisfied that they would get the conventional raise, not only did they feel no incentive toward increasing

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

the total annual volume, but actually feared to, as it meant that their next year's task would be just so much more difficult.

"I immediately changed the basis of payment to a straight percentage on sales, thus insuring a man's reaping a reward for his efforts whether exerted in March or December. At New-Year's the extra amount over his salary that a clerk has earned is presented him in a lump sum.

"Next month I shall inaugurate a new plan. I have ascertained the total sales for each department for the corresponding month of last year. This sum, divided by the number of salesmen in a department, gives me the individual volume of sales that I can expect for the month. The men have been informed that those who exceed this average will find a certain percentage of the increase added to their regular pay at the end of the month."

Losing Sales without Losing Customers

"Why don't you write something about poise and self-control in retail salesmanship?" inquired a traveling man, in addressing the writer recently. "Those are qualities that the outside salesman soon develops. If he didn't, he wouldn't last two weeks. But my experience has convinced me that it is lamentably lacking in the case of most inside men.

"Let me tell you about some instances which are fresh in my memory. Last Saturday afternoon I found myself in the market for a ready-made suit of clothes. I was willing to pay up to forty dollars, if necessary, but I had some pretty firmly fixed preconceptions regarding style and pattern.

"I entered a well-known clothier's. The salesman to whom I was allotted greeted me courteously and went to

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

great pains to display his stock. At the end of fifteen minutes it was clear to me that he could not offer me what I sought; the assortment simply 'didn't meet my needs. This was no reflection on the patterns. It was merely that the buyer's taste differed from mine.

"I felt uncomfortable at having monopolized so much of the clerk's time to no avail, and so was particularly careful to be tactful in explaining why his stock didn't just satisfy me. But when he realized that I intended to look elsewhere you'd have thought that I had stolen his watch and chain. The fellow was positively insulting.

"I left the store, vowing never to enter it again. 'What a childish attitude!' I reflected. 'Peeved about one lost sale. Why, in the course of my work I consider myself lucky to sell one man out of thirty calls. If a salesman can't accept an occasional defeat philosophically, he isn't a salesman.'

"I wandered along the street, inspecting the window displays, and finally entered another establishment. Here I found the right pattern in the right style, but the collar didn't set correctly. It hooped up. Now experience has convinced me that unless a ready-made suit comes fairly close to fitting perfectly without alterations, it's best to pass it up. I gently but firmly broke the news that I intended to look further. Another scene of wounded dignity, resentment, and scarcely veiled contempt. One more place went down on my black-list.

"In still a third store I had a similar experience, and finally, in the fourth one, I found what I sought, and purchased.

"Now my suggestion is that the managers of these stores send their clerks out to sell life insurance or books from office to office for a couple of weeks. Such a training ought to develop sufficient philosophy to enable them, upon their

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

return, to lose a sale without making the customer a permanent enemy of the house."

Good Nature an Asset

"To my way of thinking," remarked the superintendent of a department store, "a good disposition is one of the most important factors in selling goods over the counter. And, because of this belief, I have tried to develop the faculty of determining whether or not an applicant has this quality.

"Stupidity, ignorance of stock, carelessness—all these faults can be forgiven if not too often in evidence; but discourtesy—there is a positive fault which drives customers away, vowing never to return.

"A good disposition, coupled with ordinary intelligence, means a patient, courteous salesperson.

"When you stop to think of the tremendous implications resting upon the over-the-counter contact between clerk and customer, it is surprising that the former should ever forget to be courteous. A store's only income is the money which is passed over the counter. And upon the salesperson depends, in large measure, the amount of this income. All over the world, thousands of workers have been producing the goods which she handles, vast liners have brought them to our shores, a huge edifice has been erected to house them, executives have racked their brains in evolving better methods of organization, the advertising department has spent great sums in seeking to attract the public, the window-man has exerted his highest quality of genius, millions of dollars have been invested—all of this that the wary customer can be lured to her counter; and then, with an insolent manner or a mere lift of the eyebrows, the salesperson may give offense, kill the sale, and forever alienate a patron.

"I tell you that when one once awakens to a realization

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

of this, he thinks twice before giving vent to his ill-temper. Courtesy, however, is a virtue which, although it can be acquired, is natural to those blessed with good dispositions. And that is the type we are looking for in this store."

The Positive vs. the Negative Attitude

Suggestion in salesmanship, whether upon paper or in personal contact, is a potent power. All of us are influenced by suggestion. We may think that we're proof against it, but many a man who is case-hardened against direct assaults has succumbed to the almost imperceptible power of suggestion.

The progressive proprietor of a certain department store was always trying methods of increasing the efficiency of his sales force. He realized that to increase their individual sales ability but a small percentage would mean a great difference in the monthly volume of business.

One day he was running over the record of sales for the past month. "That Miss White is certainly a crackerjack," he remarked to the superintendent. "She invariably runs far ahead of any one in her department. And it can't be a case of repeat orders from a personal following. She's a comparative stranger in the city. I believe I'll investigate her methods."

A little later the proprietor took his station close to Miss White's counter. Next to her was located Miss Thompson, a girl of most pleasing personality, whose sales averaged very low.

A customer approached.

"You don't want a pair of these mocha gloves?" suggested Miss Thompson, displaying the articles.

"No," replied the customer, indifferently, and she wandered along the aisle, aimlessly studying the stock.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

"Here is something new which I believe will interest you," remarked Miss White, as the visitor halted before her location. "They're dogskins; washable"; and she launched into a description of the manifold advantages of the new arrivals. She soon had a pair on the customer's hands.

Throughout the interview the clerk held to the positive attitude. She assumed that the woman wished to buy. Not a negative note was sounded. In a moment the sale was made.

"That's where the difference comes in," said the proprietor. "Just a question of attitude."

He promptly delivered a lecture on the subject to the department managers. Within a week each clerk was taking pains to eliminate negative statements from his sales talk. The result was apparent in the monthly statement.

Intensive Retail Selling

Blake had just dropped into a prominent clothier's and haberdasher's to buy a few cravats. He completed his purchase, and as he approached the door a man accosted him, remarking, with a pleasant smile:

"I see you've just been buying some ties. ~~They're holding a sale to-day of Gotham shirts with full thirty-six-inch sleeve-lengths.~~ There they are, right over at that counter.

Blake looked in the direction indicated. Conspicuously displayed was an assortment of shirts with the previous and present prices prominently featured. He was interested. The fact that his arms were longer than the average meant that ordinarily he found difficulty in securing shirts the sleeves of which would fit him. He walked over to the counter, inspected the line, and finally invested in a half-dozen shirts.

As he once more started to leave he thanked his informant,

SELLING BEHIND THE COUNTER

and remarked: "I note that you're wearing a hat. Are you a customer or one of the store's staff?"

"I'm the assistant manager," was the reply. "But I wear a hat because a suggestion from one who may be an outsider carries more weight than from a member of the organization. I'm working on a theory which is yielding splendid results. I am trying to sell the individual, not the sex—and it works.

"Take your case, for instance. You are more than six feet in height. I noted instantly that you must have trouble in securing shirts with sufficiently long sleeves. The moment I spoke of long-sleeved garments I had your attention.

"Excuse me for a moment," and he intercepted another customer who was just making his exit.

"I note that you've been buying some shirts," he remarked. "I wonder if you've seen the ties on sale to-day. They're particularly strong on blues, and that is, perhaps, the shade which would be of especial interest to a man of your coloring."

The customer, a blond with blue eyes, looked surprised, but stopped to inspect the ties, and finally purchased a few.

"You see how it works," said the speaker, resuming his interrupted conversation. "It's a case of sizing up your man and finding the vital point of contact."

"Intensive selling, I'd call it," replied Blake, "and so sound in theory that it cannot fail to work out in practice."

VI

JUST SELLING

Finding Talking-points

“If you can’t find exclusive talking-points for your product, make ’em,” said a sales manager. “A few years ago, when I joined this concern, I was told that I’d have to sell our line, plate and window glass, on personality exclusively.

“‘There’s a selling pool in this city,’ the then sales manager explained, ‘and we’re members. Our product comes from the same factories as our competitors’; our prices and terms are the same. It’s up to the salesman’s personality to sell the goods.’

“I’d never been confronted by such a situation before and I didn’t like it. The idea of selling without talking-points was a new one to me. I put in a few weeks getting solid in my territory, and then began to devote some thought to ways and means of getting a drop on our competitors.

“I found that one great trouble in the business was breakage during shipment. Even though the transportation company could be held responsible, often a builder was put to great expense because of the delay in securing new lights of glass. One day I fell into conversation with a friend of mine, an efficiency expert. I remarked upon this difficulty. He told me of a new method of bracing packing-cases, upon the principle of the trusses on a bridge, by means of which

JUST SELLING

greater safety was assured. I took it up with our shipping department; the change was effected, with a consequent reduction in breakage. Here was one talking-point. Our entire sales force was soon applying it successfully.

“‘Good,’ was the sales manager’s verdict. ‘Think up another one.’

“I reflected that, having taken up the factor of safety, and price and quality being excluded, nothing was left but that of speed. We dug into the office routine thoroughly, with the result that, by using the ’phone more and messengers less, we cut the average time of filling an order 30 per cent.

“We played this up in a big broadside, giving exact figures from tests conducted at random, and circularized the trade. In talking to customers and prospects, our salesmen took pains to explain the matter in detail. It made a deep dent. We began to become known as the house which insured speed and safety.

“‘Very good,’ remarked the boss; ‘keep it up.’

“It wasn’t long before it was borne in upon me that there was something radically wrong with our credit department. It was administered as a side issue by an old bookkeeper, and his test of a credit policy was the percentage of losses avoided. Hundreds of very good risks were turned down as a consequence of this old-fashioned attitude. I induced the management to hire an able young credit man, who had the modern idea of creating rather than stultifying business. This added many new names to our books. The new man earned his salary ten times over. Our new credit policy began to be noised about. It constituted another talking-point.

“Two years after I joined the organization, our sales manager left to accept another offer. I was tendered the position and have held it ever since. There are exclusive

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

talking-points for every product. Find 'em; that's my idea. If you can't find 'em, make 'em."

Words, the Salesman's Tools

A good vocabulary will never make a salesman, but the lack of one often hampers an able man's efforts. Words are the salesman's tools. It is by wielding them intelligently that he earns a living.

In every prospect's brain is a defensive stone wall and every stone represents "No." They bear such labels as inertia, conservatism, prudence, habit, complacency, and so on.

Were it not for this protecting barrier, its possessor would fall prey to every salesman who tackled him, and he'd soon have no money with which to buy. Unfortunately, this wall often serves as an obstacle to the purchase of commodities which would benefit the customer. It debars the entrance of both the just and the unjust.

Behind this barrier lies the word "Yes." And it is the salesman's task to hew an opening. His mallets are will and intelligence, his chisels are words. Chisels alone will not achieve his purpose; neither will mallets. Obviously, however, the more chisels he can handle skilfully, the better his chances.

Most salesmen have very limited vocabularies. It is said that there are over sixteen thousand words in Shakespeare's writings. I doubt if the average salesman's vocabulary exceeds two thousand or three thousand. Often an objection is advanced which is difficult to meet. The salesman can formulate the defense mentally, but finds difficulty in expressing in words the exact shade of meaning he desires. He hesitates, stumbles, flounders. The sale is lost. The one right chisel to use at that moment evaded him. His vocabulary was too limited.

JUST SELLING

A broad education and a rich vocabulary will not make a salesman. But they are, nevertheless, potent aids to selling. Read good literature and plenty of it. That will develop your vocabulary, and, hence, your fluency. Don't confine your reading to the sporting page of the newspaper. Read science, history, philosophy. It means dollars in your pocket. There's a public library in your town.

The Truth—the Whole Truth

"No one is absolutely truthful," remarked a sales manager. "We all tell, or at least act, white lies. To avoid useless arguments, for example, we remain silent when views are expressed with which we don't agree. And thus often we tacitly imply something which is not true. A world in which every one told the hard, literal truth at all times would be an unpleasant place in which to live.

"I maintain, however, that it is possible to be absolutely truthful in business life and get away with it. I believe that it is not only the right thing, but, in the long run, the politic thing for a salesman to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth about his line.

"Only a day or two ago I received from a customer a complaint regarding one of our products. He said that although everything that our salesman had said about it was true, he had left unsaid certain facts which exposed drawbacks in the article.

"How about this, Miller?" I questioned the salesman, when he came in from his trip. 'Here's a letter from Roberts asserting that you didn't tell the whole story about one of our products.'

"Of course I didn't," was the reply. 'I figured that it was his business to find the weak spots. I restricted myself to recounting the strong features.'

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

“Well, young Miller will remember the sermon I delivered him for a good many years. I explained that not only was he hurting the reputation of the house, but that he was hurting himself.

“‘Don’t you know that as a man approaches middle life he carries his character on his face?’ I demanded. ‘Don’t you know that if you cling to this policy of deceit, for it is deceit, even though tacit, as the years pass you’ll develop the shifty eye and the furtive manner of the liar? Don’t you know that if you can’t sell a product without telling the whole truth about it, it’s up to you to change your job?’ I talked to Miller like a Dutch uncle, and when I got through he admitted that I was right.

“Now, as a matter of fact, I have never found that it did a bit of harm to tell the whole truth about an article. One’s willingness to expose the weak spots never fails to carry conviction regarding your sincerity, and, as a consequence, your advocacy of it makes a deep impression.

“‘Here is an honest man,’ reflects the prospect. ‘He urged me to purchase. I’m inclined to let his arguments sway me. I’m safe in following his advice.’

“The article’s merits loom larger in his eyes because of the salesman’s admission of certain minor drawbacks. For one customer you lose by your scrupulous insistence upon telling the whole truth, you’ll get five. At least, that has been my experience.”

Aggressive Salesmen

“It’s seldom that one sees an ad. for salesmen which doesn’t use the word ‘aggressive’ as descriptive of the type of man desired,” remarked a traveling man. “How I dislike that word! It conjures up a picture of some noisy, boisterous fellow, breezing into a man’s office, declaiming in loud tones, and finally throttling the prospect into signing an

JUST SELLING

order. As a matter of fact, in my opinion more sales are lost through too positive, dogmatic a manner than through the reverse.

"When I was a younger man I believed in this aggressive business. I thought that the only way to close a sale was as the result of a prolonged battle of words. I visualized each sale as a bitter struggle. Well, it was—for me. Entering a man's office with that idea in view, it was not strange that I found what I sought. Through a too peremptory, decided manner I immediately created a spirit of opposition which lost me many sales. Some men can be bulldozed into buying, but not many. Few men of that type are in a position to be doing any buying.

"It wasn't until I went out with our star salesman one day to learn his tactics that I took a tumble. There was not a hint of aggressiveness in his manner. He greeted a prospect just as he would a friend at his club, easily, casually, good-humoredly. As objections were raised he met them, firmly, amicably, but without a trace of obstinacy. He was persistent, but not dogmatic; firm, but not aggressive. The entire transaction took on the color of a friendly discussion rather than of a dog-fight. You see, the man had tact and poise. And how he closed sales!

"One day was enough for me. I learned my lesson. I promptly began to apply my newly gained knowledge. I visualized a sale in an entirely different way. I saw that my mistake had been to raise opposition rather than to allay it. The result was that my sales began to increase and I expended much less energy in making them.

"No man who lacks poise, moral courage, and a certain inherent forcefulness can succeed as a salesman. But these qualities are not expressed by aggressiveness—rather by the lack of it. The quiet, gentlemanly bearing of a man who feels sure of himself and anticipates a friendly recep-

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

tion is the proper one for a salesman. If you go out looking for trouble you'll find it. If you go out with the idea of helping a man's business by inducing him to see the merits of your product, he is likely to meet you in the spirit that such a viewpoint creates. 'Aggressiveness' is not the word to describe a qualification of a salesman. 'Poise' comes nearer to hitting the mark."

Selling on Saturday

"Many salesmen work but five days a week," remarked one, recently. "They know that they can't sell on Sunday; they think that they can't on Saturday. And the effect of this two-day lay-off is, as a rule, extremely disastrous to Monday sales. Every salesman complains of the difficulty of getting warmed up to his work on Monday morning.

"Salesmen think Saturday is a hoodoo because many business houses close at noon. And if they deal with retailers, they point out that it's a busy day, with the payroll to attend to, and that it's impossible to rivet a prospect's attention.

"Now I think that nine times out of ten the salesman is merely kidding himself. It's more difficult to sell on Saturday than on Friday, that I'll admit; but nevertheless sales can be made.

"Take my line, for example. I'm city salesman for a wholesale paper house. I sell chiefly to retailers. For years I quit at noon on Saturday, on the plea that it was hopeless to talk to merchants on Saturday afternoon. And very often I did not work in the morning.

"One Saturday I concluded to experiment. After lunch, I took a car to the outskirts and began to canvass the small stores. Unlike the down-town dealers, they seemed to have plenty of time to talk.

JUST SELLING

“By five-thirty I had a sheaf of orders, small individually, but a goodly sum in the aggregate. And on the following Monday I found that it required less time to get warmed up to my work. Thus I derived two benefits from my end-of-the-week effort.

“Since then I have worked right up to Saturday night, and the results have shown in my commissions. Saturday sales are not impossible of attainment. And money made on Saturday is just exactly as good as that made on any other day.”

How this Salesman Avoids Political Arguments

“My business lies among men of all nationalities, sympathies, and viewpoints,” remarked a young salesman. “And each is anxious to discuss present-day events. If I agree with all opinions expressed, I am a hypocrite. If I disagree, I risk losing a customer. What can I do?”

“I’m confronted with the same difficulty,” replied an older salesman. “And I meet the situation just as I always did in the old days of bitter political campaigns when a Cleveland man thought a Republican deserved hanging, and a supporter of Ben Harrison thought his opponents should be shot at sunrise.

“I pretend to have but little interest in the great issues at stake. A man will forgive you for being what he considers inconceivably ignorant of contemporaneous events, but opposition is like waving a red flag at a bull. My policy is to agree with the customer, but to quench his enthusiasm by my lukewarm attitude. He concludes that I’m a poor fish of few convictions; a purblind fellow who has concentrated his attention on the dotted line for so many years that nothing can lift him out of his benighted condition. But, at the same time, he entertains no resentment.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

"Then it is easy to shift his attention to the matter directly in hand—orders. My employer doesn't hire me to air my personal views on the conduct of national affairs. If he did, he'd back me in a campaign for Congress. My job is to look after his business interests in my territory; not to deliver speeches on the fate of the Republic. The less I have to say about affairs of state, the more valuable I am to my concern. A salesman must, to a certain extent, be all things to all men, but his chief job, for the present at least, is to be a salesman."

Salesmen and Super-salesmen

The controversy as to whether salesmen are born or made has long raged virulently. One group asserts that the talent for selling is inborn and cannot consciously be acquired; the opponents believe that any normal individual can be taught to sell. The truth, obviously, lies between these two extremes.

Some men are so conspicuously lacking in certain necessary basic qualities upon which a superstructure of knowledge and experience must be reared in order to make a successful salesman, that it is a waste of time to expend the required time and effort upon them. But, on the other hand, doubtless there is not a salesman, however successful, whose work cannot be improved by a conscious and studied effort to gain a comprehension of the fundamental principles of salesmanship.

In other words, the laws of ordinary horse sense which apply to every branch of human activity apply to salesmanship. Pre-eminent ability in any line of work is, as a rule, the result of natural talent plus training and experience.

In discussing this question, each side seems to forget that

JUST SELLING

there is a vast difference between salesmen. Some are paid twenty dollars a week, others two hundred dollars, depending upon the difficulty of marketing the article handled, as well as upon the volume of sales. Training will enable almost any one to earn twenty dollars a week as a salesman. But certain natural qualities serve, probably, as a foundation for the ability which the two-hundred-dollar-a-week man displays.

Just where would one draw the line between the order-taker, the salesman, and the super-salesman? Assuredly definition of just what constitutes a salesman should be made before the question can be intelligently discussed.

And one's final conclusion would probably be that almost any one can become an order-taker; that a good many men can be developed into salesmen; but that the super-salesman is, after all, born, not merely made.

How to Sell

"Here is a card issued by some concern as an ad.," remarked a local business man. "There's a lot of sound sales sense in its message. Perhaps your readers will find it valuable," and he presented the writer with the following:

Unguided by Psychology, salesmanship is crude. Good advertising must recognize facts like these:

People are dilatory. Without some incentive to prompt action or decision, they will usually delay and forget.

It is natural to follow others. Impress folks with the crowd that goes your way.

It is natural to obey. A direct command is more effective than request.

People don't like problems. Present them only the worked-out solutions.

Too evident desire to sell puts men on guard against you.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

Curiosity incites men more than fact. Half-told tales have interest which completed tales have not.

Men covet an advantage. Things they can get which others can't are things they want the most.

Folks are not impressed by boasting.

When you quote others to confirm your statements you indict your own veracity.

Evident bias kills influence. Praise of an article is made doubly effective by a touch of criticism.

Clever Comparisons Help this Salesman

"It's not what you say that counts, but how you say it," remarked a successful salesman. "The price of almost anything, whether it's a commodity or personal services, can be made to appear low. But the proper contrast must be made.

"For example, an acquaintance of mine, an efficiency expert, is paid a salary of twenty thousand dollars by a great mercantile house. 'How did you ever gouge that much out of old Marden?' I inquired. 'It must hurt him to pay any one that figure.'

"'He signed a contract guaranteeing me fifteen per cent. of the net savings I should succeed in effecting,' was the reply. 'And it worked out at twenty thousand dollars per year. Fifteen per cent. of the net savings didn't sound like much. But I knew just about what it would total.'

"In selling my line, high-priced adding-machines, I follow the same principle. My entire canvass consists in painting a picture of the savings which will be effected. I figure it out in black and white: so many men's time at so much a month equals so much a year, and so much in ten years. By that time I'm talking in thousands. Not until that point do I name the price of my machine. It sounds low by contrast.

JUST SELLING

“At one time I sold courses in a correspondence school. Here I followed the same tactics. I told of actual cases of men who had increased their earning power thousands per year. I inflamed the prospect’s imagination with pictures of automobiles, ease, and prosperity. By the time I had reached the ‘just put your name on the dotted line’ point, the price, a paltry fifty or sixty dollars, seemed insignificant.

“The same plan is pursued in retail selling. A woman enters a shop, planning to spend perhaps five dollars on a waist. Fifteen- or twenty-dollar ones are also casually brought to her attention. The result is that when she pays ten dollars she thinks she is paying a low price. Everything is comparative. American multi-millionaires frequently pay several hundred thousand dollars for an old master. Not even a pork-packer buying paint would fall for such figures were he not tactfully handled and boosted *via* the clever comparison method.”

“The Great Factor in Selling is the Human Factor”

Mr. Cottingham, president of the Sherwin-Williams Co., recently remarked:

“The great factor in selling is the human factor, and not the things we sell. The things must be right, of course; but it’s people who buy and use the things, and therefore it’s people whom we must interest and deal with in getting rid of things.

“Too many business men are paying too much attention to the things they make, and not enough attention to the people who make them, the people who sell them, and the people who use them. It’s not things that make life—it’s people. It’s not things that make business, it’s people—people with red blood in their veins, men and women with hearts and feelings and aims and ambitions, men and

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

women susceptible to encouragement and sympathy and training and discipline.

"The sales department must recognize this difference between things and people. It must understand the importance of the human factor. It touches all sides of the sales proposition."

Salesmanship: An Art or a Science?

"Despite the vast mass of literature on the subject, the correspondence-school courses, lectures, etc., the psychology of salesmanship remains to-day pretty much of a mystery," said one of this country's conspicuously successful salesmen.

"The science of salesmanship has been well worked out, the subject has been thoroughly analyzed and supposedly conclusive principles formulated. And hardly a day passes but that you'll find some salesman who is utterly in ignorance of the work which has been done along these lines, outselling the scientific type three to one.

"This is because salesmanship is an art as well as a science. And art defies analysis. There is a quality of inspiration involved which upsets all preconceived theories.

"In the palmy days of oratory, before the advent of the widely distributed press had rendered forensics a nearly lost art, it was widely recognized that the successful orator possessed the power of swaying vast throngs even against their better judgment. One man might deliver a speech without perceptible effect; another man might utter identically the same words and convert thousands to his viewpoint. Salesmanship is oratory transmuted to the purposes of commerce. The reason that one salesman succeeds where another fails is because the former has mastered the art of oratory. The difference lies not in the words uttered, but in the manner of delivery, the personality of the speaker,

JUST SELLING

the effect of such indeterminable factors as a handclasp, a tone quality of the voice, a glance of the eye, etc.

"My theory that salesmanship is an art as well as a science is further supported by the fact that the first-class salesman is generally somewhat uneven and erratic in performance. Some days he can sell much better than others. All first-rank artists are subject to similar fluctuations of power.

"Let it be understood that my conception of a first-class salesman includes only the man who can sell more or less intangible articles: advertising service, securities, high-priced books, etc. Men who are merely good pluggers can sell ordinary merchandise which a customer must, of necessity, buy somewhere.

"Many first-class salesmen are engaged in selling mere merchandise, of course, but *only* first-class salesmen can succeed in the more difficult branches of the art.

"For some years I have been selling a twenty-dollar set of business books. My commissions approximate ten thousand dollars annually. I work utterly without leads—straight office-to-office canvassing.

"Monday is always my hardest day. I become stiffened up over Sunday. I refuse to canvass a man who will not give me his undivided attention. If I haven't sold my man within three to four minutes, ninety-nine times out of a hundred I've lost him.

"I always force myself to visualize a man as sold before starting my canvass. By an effort of will I cling to that mental attitude. To it I attribute, to some degree, at least, my success. My canvass is devoid of pyrotechnics; it is delivered in a moderate tone of voice, without gestures, and I always seek to hold the listener's eye.

"I find selling very exhausting to one's vitality and nervous energy. At night I'm as tired as I used to be after a day in the harvest-field. Much valuable information re-

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

garding salesmanship can be gained from others; but the trade, profession, art—whatever you wish to call it—must be actually mastered in what Elbert Hubbard used to call the University of Hard Knocks.”

A Double-barreled Method of Selling

“The problem which confronts a great many salesmen,” remarked one of the most successful newspaper advertising solicitors in America, “is how to establish the superiority of the article you are selling over that in use by the prospect without offending him by insinuating that his judgment is poor. Too strong a solicitation carries conviction, but is likely to so alienate the listener that he refuses to deal with you. Too weak a canvass preserves the peace, but fails to make the necessary impression. I am not in business merely to make friends, but chiefly to make customers; in other words, to bring in signed contracts.

“Here is my solution of the problem. To a man in my position, whose territory is confined to but one city, it has proved practicable.

“In my first interview I don’t mince words. I am so aggressive in driving home my points and exposing the errors of the prospect’s present or past policy that often he becomes offended. But my claims make a dent. He knows there’s a salesman there, not a pleasant companion to discuss the weather or the ball-game. Then I deliver a parting shot and make my exit.

“I give my first solicitation two days in which to simmer in the listener’s mind. At the same time, this waiting period gives him a chance to cool off.

“Then I call again. This time my manner is very mild. I figure that the actual heavy work of driving home my arguments has been done. I take the good-fellow attitude

JUST SELLING

and thus make it easy for the customer to act according to his own best interests without feeling that he is giving a contract to a man who has offended him.

"This policy of mine is the result of twenty years' sales experience. It works with me. Perhaps it will with you. Better try it."

Are Salesmen Born or Made?

"I note that a member of the faculty of a university which is specializing on business and commercial courses claims that the theory that 'salesmen are born, not made,' is a fallacy," said a sales manager.

"Now I take issue with him on this point. My experience, involving interviews with thousands of applicants and the study of the records of hundreds of salesmen, has convinced me that there is a type which could properly be called the salesman type. And I believe that there are types which, though supported by the most thorough preliminary training, could never succeed as salesmen, and yet might score great successes in other lines of endeavor.

"Don't interpret me as a critic of scientific training in salesmanship. I believe that proper instruction will increase a salesman's efficiency many hundred per cent. But I don't believe that every man of good ability can be developed into a salesman.

"Some men, for example, are slow thinkers. But they may be exceedingly sure. Their kind of thinking may be much sounder than the quick thinkers. But they'll fail as salesmen. For the salesman must meet and defeat objections instantly.

"I once knew an eminent lawyer who later became a judge. For a man of unusual ability, he was perhaps the slowest thinker I ever met. He thought so slowly that in

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

conversation he would drone along, consuming thrice as much time as the average person in uttering a sentence.

"But that man's mind was machine-like in the precision of its mental processes. His reasoning was sound, logical, and absolutely convincing. His brain was of a quality to command universal respect. When a law student, he tried to add to his income by selling law-books. He scored a flat failure because he was diametrically the opposite of the salesman type. I do not believe that any amount of training would have made a salesman of this example."

For the Young Salesman

"If I had my life to live over again would I become a salesman?" said a veteran, echoing the writer's question.

"Yes, I would. The life has its drawbacks, but so has any life. Figures prove that the earnings of the average salesman considerably exceed those of the average professional man.

"If, however, I were a youngster, I would pursue an entirely different course from that I was forced to follow. I imagine that every complex civilization has had its traveling salesmen. I suppose that five thousand years ago, knights of the grip used to make Samarkand, Bokhara, Bagdad, and Babylon. But, so far as I can learn, it is but recently that any attention has been paid to the scientific teaching of the profession.

"When I was a youngster of twenty, 'back in the old horse-car days,' as the cigarette ads. say, I was flung out with a line of goods and a territory, to sink or swim. I swam. But only after receiving a lot of unnecessary and time-consuming duckings. Too many young fellows follow the same haphazard policy to-day. And I believe

JUST SELLING

it's responsible for the failure of many a potential salesman.

"If I were beginning my career to-day, I'd enroll in a first-class college of salesmanship. By that I mean that I'd pry an opening into one of the several well-known concerns which are famed for their efficient sales organizations. Some of them insist that a candidate for the sales force take a course in selling at the home office before going out on the road. Here is where a young fellow gains about eighteen laps on the field. He profits by the concentrated experience of some of the best ability in the country. Such a training cannot make a good salesman out of a dub, but it *will* make a star salesman out of ordinary material.

"An average man, graduating from the country's best school of law or medicine, stands a better show of success in his profession than a phenomenon matriculating at some obscure fresh-water institution. The same applies to selling.

"Get the right start; that's a great asset. A few weeks with one of the crack organizations will teach you more than you'd gain perhaps in years of floundering about. Selling is a profitable field for any man. But like any other profession, it should be learned, not merely picked up."

Serving an Apprenticeship in Selling

"There are various ways of classifying salesmen," remarked a sales manager, "but here is one which appeals to me as logical and illuminating: (1) inside salesmen of commodities; (2) outside salesmen of commodities for re-sale; (3) outside salesmen of commodities to the consumer; and (4) outside salesmen of intangibilities, such as life insurance, advertising space, expert services, etc. And, in my opinion, the grades of sales ability demanded are repre-

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

sented roughly by the order in which I have named these classes.

“Many young men make the mistake of overrating their ability and starting their careers by tackling the most difficult job, number four, first. They fail—conclude that they lack selling ability, and relinquish the idea of becoming salesmen.

“This is unfortunate. It is quite likely that, had they started in the lower ranks and gradually learned their trade, they might ultimately have graduated into the higher.

“Why not start with number one—selling in a store? It is relatively poorly paid, but the experience is valuable. Of course, it is comparatively easy to sell a person who has come in to purchase.

“After a few months of this sort of training, why not tackle number two—selling commodities for resale? The manufacturer’s salesman, selling to the jobber, or the jobber’s selling to the retailer, represents this class. The customer must buy from some one. It is the salesman’s task merely to convince him that he is the man from whom to purchase.

“Suppose one makes good in this line. He is assured of a good living. But, generally speaking, number three, selling commodities to the consumer, is more difficult and, hence, even better paid. Specialty salesmen who market adding-machines, check-protectors, filing-systems, books, cash registers, etc., are included in this division. Also real-estate salesmen. Here is a case where the customer does not, as in the case of the retailer, have to buy from some one. A market must be created.

“And finally comes number four, the aristocracy of salesmanship. Here is where you find the occasional twenty-thousand-dollar-a-year man. Yet youngsters with no experience tackle work of this sort daily. Salesmanship, like

JUST SELLING

everything else, must be mastered in the harsh school of experience. My advice to young salesmen is first to serve an apprenticeship in the lower ranks."

Handshaking

"The question of whether or not a salesman should offer to shake hands with a prospect depends upon several factors," remarked a veteran. "It depends upon what you're selling, in what part of the country you're selling it, under what circumstances the interview was secured, to what class of men you're selling, to what particular individual you're talking, and, last but not least, upon the type of man you yourself are.

"Generally speaking, I advise shaking hands whenever you think the ceremony will be welcomed. It establishes a certain human bond which helps to lubricate the transaction.

"Take the first factor—what you're selling. A prospect doesn't expect to shake hands with a canvasser for rubber stamps or collar clips, while it seems quite natural in the case of an insurance or bond salesman. Undemocratic, you say. Perhaps so, but explainable largely on the grounds of the time involved in the transaction.

"The second factor, geography, is a vital one. I used to sell law-books. Experience taught me that to offer to shake hands with a typical Boston lawyer was a mistake, while in Kansas City it was a good approach.

"How the interview was secured; there's another factor. If you have a personal lead, or have called in response to a request, it's almost always safe to shake hands. In straight office-to-office canvassing more discrimination must be exerted.

"Then comes the question of the class of men to whom

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

you're selling. Real-estate men, automobile men, insurance brokers—yes, shake hands with them. Bankers, lawyers, retail merchants over fifty years old, men in charge of religious activities of all sorts—no.

“All these general rules are subject to modification by the personality of the particular individual to whom you're talking. That's where keen perceptions enter into the matter. Size up your man as you approach his desk.

“And, finally, just what kind of man are you—the salesman? If you're naturally genial and a good mixer, you might shake hands with John D. and get away with it. If you're the colder, more intellectual type, depending upon calm exposition and cool logic to make your sales, then you will, very wisely, be rather chary of handshaking tactics. For, with you, it would seem out of character and fail to carry conviction.”

The Salesman of the Future

“Some day a salesman will appear on this planet,” remarked a sales manager, “who will possess many virtues. When he receives a bulletin from the home office listing numbers the supply of which is exhausted, he will carefully go over his records and catalogue and eliminate those items. As a result this salesman will never subject his employer to the loss and expense consequent upon being forced to reject orders which represent many dollars in salesmen's salaries.

“Another virtue of this salesman will be the fact that, after spending a few months in a territory, he will not conclude that, so far as prospects are concerned, it is exhausted, and that, because of this, he had better devote all his energy to holding in line all customers gained up to that time.

“This salesman, too, will not expect the sales manager to

JUST SELLING

pat him on the back when he comes in with a long story about all the prospects he has lined up, and later expect another round of laudation for selling some of these self-same prospects.

"Another point about this salesman will be that, when he loses a choice order which the boss had been counting on, he will have nothing to say about graft, personal favoritism, superiority of the competing product, or suicidal price-cutting. He may even remark that possibly, had his salesmanship been equal to the emergency, he might have landed the order.

"And, finally, this salesman will turn in at least half as many orders dated Saturday as those dated upon the other days of the week. And there will be no curtailment of his sales upon rainy days."

Optimism—a Requisite of Salesmanship

"I don't agree with these theorists who assert that salesmanship can be mastered by any normal individual," remarked a successful traveling man. "In my opinion, this idea is as absurd as to claim that acting or oratory can be learned by any one. Acting, oratory, salesmanship—any one can be taught the theory of all three. But to successfully apply it is a different proposition.

"A school-boy can mouth the words of the Gettysburg oration. Are you thrilled by his rendition? Similarly, a clear, logical exposition of the merits of certain merchandise can be delivered by any one after sufficient thought and study. But more than this is required to get the name on the dotted line.

"Some men have certain natural qualifications which, if carefully nurtured and intelligently developed, will make of their possessors able salesmen. Other men are so

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

lacking in these qualities that they cannot succeed in this field.

“First among requisite traits I would name optimism—an inexhaustible, natural fund of it. There are two reasons which explain the importance of this quality. One is that selling, with its big proportion of fruitless endeavor, is very discouraging work. And the other is that it is through becoming infected with the salesman’s enthusiastic optimism that the purchaser overcomes his natural objection to spending his money, and, consequently, concludes to purchase. I have never met a notably successful salesman who did not seem to possess a particularly optimistic temperament.

“With natural optimism as a basis upon which to build, much can be done. A too brusque manner can be softened; a too mild and obsequious approach can be stiffened. Fluency can be developed in the hesitant; volubility can be curbed in the loquacious. Quick thinking and self-possession can be fostered in the self-conscious; persistence can be developed in those lacking it. Tact, an agreeable manner, a thorough knowledge of the goods, an insight into human nature, ‘mixing ability’—all these are, to a great extent, matters of experience and training. But optimism—either you are or you’re not optimistic. And I’m convinced that without it no man can consistently succeed in selling.”

Getting a Start

“Often I am asked by my customers’ clerks how they can break into selling,” remarked one of a jobber’s sales force. “They see nothing ahead of them in a retail store and feel that the traveling salesman’s life appeals to them.

“I think that most salesmen are evolved by the same method. First they get a job in some clerical capacity for

JUST SELLING

a firm which employs outside salesmen, and later they are given an opportunity to show what they can do on the firing-line. The advantage of this is that before they test their mettle on the road they receive a thorough preparation as regards the merits of the goods they will handle. As a consequence, their one problem is to sell; they don't have to stall and fake when questioned about the commodity.

"A great many salesmen, however, have been developed without this preliminary training. Sometimes they have answered an ad. for a local representative on commission, received their samples, and gone out and made sales. Backed by the confidence thus engendered, they have not hesitated to apply for a regular salaried job with some house, sold themselves to the sales manager, and got away with it.

"Still others have gone out on any one of the perennial propositions which are constantly in search of men. I refer to certain magazines, concerns which sell goods through house-to-house canvassing, etc. Firms of this type will give any well-dressed, clean-cut young chap a trial. Through this experience they have achieved sufficient training and poise to fit them for more profitable work, gone after a better job and landed it. This might be termed, 'stealing the trade.' Thousands of very able salesmen have got their start in this fashion. The drawback to it is this: as a rule, these propositions are rather difficult to sell. Consequently, many a youngster, who might have made good if he had started with an easier line, becomes discouraged at his failure and concludes that he'll never make a salesman.

"To go out and make a living on one of these enterprises where one's earnings come only from brand-new customers is a quite different proposition from entering a well-developed territory for some wholesale house where one is aided by the orders gained from regular customers.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

“I think that a great deal of timber which might have been developed into good salesmanship material is spoiled by being devoted to too tough a job before being properly seasoned.

“On the whole, my advice to the young man wishing to become a salesman is to start with some low-paid inside job. Then, after a couple of years in learning the line, the sales manager should be willing to grant him an opportunity to demonstrate whether or not he has any sales ability. His chances for succeeding are much better in such a case than if he starts right out on a difficult office-to-office or house-to-house enterprise without any training in salesmanship.”

Heart vs. Head Appeal

“Generally speaking,” remarked a traveling man, “salesmen can be divided into two classes—those whose appeal is emotional, or to the heart, and those whose appeal is logical, or to the head. Or to state it a little differently, those who sell on the basis of personality and those who sell on the basis of cold dollars and cents.

“The first type of salesman feels that it is necessary to make a personal friend of every important customer. The second type is so busy in covering new prospects and in working his territory intensively that he has no time to establish very close bonds with any customer.

“Which policy pays the better?—that is the question. I think, by the convincing test of results, noting the policies of the top-liners of various organizations, it will be shown that the logical policy is the most successful. It is true that the man who sells on his personality may have a strangle hold on the business of certain important customers. But the time required to create friendships among the trade is

JUST SELLING

so great that he sees far fewer people in the course of the week than does his rival, and when it comes to checking up the total volume of sales at the end of the month his hustling colleague will be seen to have outstripped him.

“It seems to me that the day of the man who sold exclusively on personality is passing. Too much buying is now done by professional purchasing-agents, who permit nothing but the merits of the goods to enter into their decisions, and now that the long profits of former days can no longer be reaped, dealers have to figure more closely than of yore. As a consequence, friendship plays less part in placing orders. The best that close acquaintance with a buyer will achieve is a chance to meet the low bidder’s price.

“Selling solely on personality is wasteful of time and money. It adds an unnecessary burden, which is ultimately borne by the consumer, to the cost of doing business. In my opinion, this method is slated for the scrap-heap. The salesman of the future is the man who delivers his canvass, closes the order, and passes on to the next prospect. His time is too valuable to be spent in taking customers to a *matinée* or in loafing over a billiard-table. He is courteous, agreeable, and a good mixer, but his time is valuable and he expects others to appreciate that fact. He talks, thinks, and acts rapidly. His appeal is, primarily, to the prospect’s head, not to his heart. He expects orders on the strength of his line, not because of his agreeable personality. He is efficient to the last degree and he is welcomed in offices which are efficiently conducted.”

Memorize or Extemporize?

“Should a salesman memorize a canvass and deliver it word for word, or should he soak himself thoroughly in his

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

subject and then deliver a talk which is memorized only to the extent of its general plan? That is a question which is argued pro and con at every gathering of salesmen," said one of long experience.

"In my opinion, the answer depends upon two factors, the man and the product. Only recently I put the question to a man who is a consistent top-liner of a big, nationally distributed force of magazine and book salesmen. He replied that he never gave exactly the same talk twice in succession, that, in some degree, he trusted to the inspiration of the moment. 'If I should memorize my canvass word for word,' he remarked, 'what would I do if thrown out of my stride by an unforeseen question or objection? Deprived of my memorized speech, wouldn't I begin to stumble and lose my poise?'

"A day or two later I asked a particularly successful cash-register salesman the same question. 'I deliver a memorized combination canvass and demonstration exactly like a parrot,' he replied, 'except that I take pains to disguise the fact that it is memorized. As to the point brought up by the bookman about interruptions and objections, I simply smother them with the statement that I'll answer all questions after completing my demonstration. When I get through I know that not one single talking-point has been overlooked. It's all there, because my talk is the result of days of quiet, uninterrupted study. This plan works well with me. I am one of the leaders in my line.'

"Now, then, what is the answer? It seems to me that much depends on the product. Suppose a man is a solicitor for an advertising agency and is out to sell the brains and experience of his employers. He cannot deliver a memorized canvass, for the problems he will meet in each concern are utterly different. He must adapt his talk to the men and conditions he meets. But a cash register or a type-

JUST SELLING

writer are different propositions. The principal point here is the machine, not the condition of the prospect's business. So long as the dominant feature of the sale is the seller's product and not the peculiarly individual needs of the purchaser, memorizing would seem to be a good plan. But where the reverse is the case, a different rule applies. The bookman to whom I referred sells a set of business books. He must show the customer just how these books will be a good investment as applied to his particular problems. Plainly, therefore, his talk must vary with varying cases.

"Now as to the salesman himself. Always bearing in mind the nature of the product, I should say that, generally speaking, the mediocre or inexperienced man had best stick to a memorized canvass. But the exceptional man who has perfect poise can express himself with utter ease and is never rattled. This type can probably extemporize a more convincing talk as applied to the particular prospect with whom he is confronted than he could memorize. That is my policy, and I'm rated a pretty good salesman."

Breaking Away

"In going over my salesmen's daily reports a short time ago, it was borne in upon me that they were not making enough calls," remarked a sales manager. "At our weekly conference, I brought up the question.

"What's wrong, boys?" I inquired. "I don't question your industry. I know that you put in a long, hard day. Why does it take so long to get through with a customer?"

"It isn't closing the sale that takes the time," replied one. "At least in my case. But it's the breaking away after the order is secured. It seems so ungracious to grab your hat and run after you've just made some money out of a man. I find that unless a customer is very busy he

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

seems to like to have a salesman stop and yarn along with him for a half-hour or so after the deal is closed. That's what consumes the time. The problem, therefore, is to make a quick get-away without offending the customer.'

"'That's it exactly,' agreed another. And all of them united in declaring this feature a serious time-consumer.

"'Well, now we've diagnosed the case, the next thing is to prescribe,' I replied.

"'Let's assume the sale is closed. Then devote five minutes to the good-fellow stuff. Talk about anything in which the customer seems interested. At the end of that time glance at your watch, exclaim that you have an appointment to meet So-and-so (the next man on your list), and break away. That ought to rob your exit of any offense.'

"They agreed to try it out. The following week the average number of calls increased from twelve per day to seventeen. Sales increased in not quite this ratio. This was because a good deal of the additional effort was expended upon missionary work. Within a month, however, the sales increase was commensurate with the increase in the number of calls. This gain has since been held. And the men admit that not a customer has taken offense at their curtailed calls."

A Salesman's Future

"A salesman's career is a good deal like a ball-player's," remarked one, recently. "He starts in the minor league; if successful, makes the major league; holds his place in the limelight for a few years, then is supplanted by the younger man, drops back into the minors and, finally, into obscurity.

"It is seldom that one finds a star salesman who is over forty-five. This is because there is an element other than

JUST SELLING

brains and experience which enters into salesmanship. Sheer vitality plays a big part. And the older men simply can't stand the gaff.

"Too many salesmen are improvident. They earn a good living and spend every cent of their salaries. They fail to anticipate the inevitable arrival of that day when they can't put it over with their old-time pep and magnetism.

"The canny salesman, on the other hand, looks ahead. There are three logical goals to which the salesman can aspire. One is a sales-managership, another is a partnership, and the third is the ownership of a retail store. I myself am aiming at the first. The second requires too much capital, and the third is a field in which success can be gained only by a thorough study of the science of retailing, a pretty deep subject.

"Not every good salesman can be a good sales manager. But sales experience goes a long way toward qualifying a man for the job. To the average salesman, the boss's job looks easy. He doesn't realize that just as the latter is always prodding him for more sales, so the owners are prodding the chief.

"Sales management is a science. It involves a profound understanding of men, markets, management, and, as business is now conducted, a good working knowledge of advertising. I don't mean that a sales manager should necessarily be a thorough advertising man, but he should grasp the potentialities of this great modern force sufficiently to enable him to utilize the publicity man's efforts to the fullest extent.

"Within a month I am going to leave the road to accept the assistant sales-managership of our concern. This step involves a considerable financial sacrifice. I am second man in our force and I make a mighty good living. But I'm looking ahead. A sales manager is an asset up to the

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

age of sixty—this if he keeps abreast of the best modern practice. A salesman starts on the down grade at forty-five. Those fifteen years mean all the difference between a green old age free from care, and dependence upon one's children. Three or four years at a desk should fit me for a manager's job with some concern. Then I can look forward to the future without a qualm.

“Reinvest some of your dividends in knowledge which will enable you to play your hand through to the finish.”

The Salesman Type

“One cannot have lived upon this ball of mud as I have for over fifty years,” remarked a local business man, “without realizing that within certain very vaguely defined limits people do ‘look the part.’ There are thousands of exceptions to the rule, and yet there is no question that a composite face derived from a convention of doctors, say, would look quite different from that secured from a convention of sea-captains. Some sea-captains look like doctors and some doctors look like sea-captains, but, in a general way, there is a certain resemblance among the bulk of the doctors and among the bulk of the sea-captains.

“During my experience, which has covered the hiring and sometimes the firing of hundreds of salesmen, I have come to the conclusion that there is a fairly well defined salesman type. Everything else being equal, I feel more confident that a man who looks like a salesman will make good rather than will one who doesn't. I say this despite the fact that the ablest salesman I ever employed looked like a college professor.

“My mental picture of the born salesman is that of a rather stockily built man, blue or gray eyed, with a somewhat florid coloring. He is a doer rather than a thinker.

JUST SELLING

By this I do not mean that his brain is not active. It is that he thinks about concrete, practical problems rather than about abstractions. He is extremely social in his inclinations, a full-blooded, buoyant, optimistic chap given to thinking of his successes rather than of his failures; always expecting the next order to be the biggest he has ever written, and so confident of his power and ability that, as a rule, he is, until well past middle life, a very free spender. I've a strong impression that figures would prove that, considering their per-capita income, salesmen save less than almost any other type.

"He grows old slowly. Up to the end of his life there is a thoughtless, boyish quality about the natural salesman that distinguishes him from a lawyer, a doctor, or a scientific man.

"As a rule, this imaginary salesman of mine is a blatantly masculine type; that is to say, there is not a hint of those fussy, old-maidish qualities which so often with advancing years grow upon the accountant or office type of man.

"He possesses a strong sense of humor, and pomposity or any tendency to take himself too seriously is notably lacking. Some woman-hater has said that cats and dogs represent the two sexes. Cats are finicky, obsessed by a deep interest in their immediate environment, lack a sense of humor, and are not good mixers. Dogs are interested in people rather than in things, are always ready for a frolic, care nothing for dignity, and are extremely social. I think that cats and dogs do represent the qualities which we have agreed to describe by the terms feminine and masculine, but believe that as often as not men possess feminine traits and women masculine. In any case, the typical salesman is all masculine. He resembles the dog rather than the cat.

"This genial human quality in the natural salesman is one of his great assets. It makes people like him on sight.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

And even though they have no wish to buy, they can't quite refuse to listen to his story. As every salesman knows, securing the interview is half the battle.

"Test this theory of mine on the next few successful salesmen you meet. You'll find some exceptions, I'll grant, but see if, generally speaking, they don't resemble the man I've described."

This Salesman's Explanation of His Success

"You may think that a sale is made when the prospect's name goes on the dotted line," said a veteran traveling man, "but you're dead wrong. The sale is made outside the prospect's door; or even perhaps at breakfast that morning. The sale is made at the exact moment the salesman convinces himself it *shall* be made; and not before nor after. After years in the game, that is my conclusion.

"A sale depends about one part on the prospect's attitude to ninety-nine parts on the salesman's. Otherwise how do you explain the fact that of two men delivering exactly the same canvass and calling upon approximately the same number of prospects daily, one will make ten sales to the other's two?

"Eloquence doesn't make a salesman, clothes don't make a salesman, persistence doesn't make a salesman, but control, whether conscious or unconscious, of one's mental attitude *does* make a salesman. This means sustained effort on the part of most men and a degree of concentration that is not easy to attain. But it's what makes salesmen.

"If, before starting the day's work, you can't hypnotize yourself into believing that you've got the world by the tail and that you're going to bring in your quota of scalps that night, you'll never be a salesman. An order-taker, yes; most so-called salesmen are that. But a salesman is

JUST SELLING

a man who can so dominate an interview that his prospect's attitude toward the question at issue is entirely under the former's control."

A Salesman Must Be a Philosopher

"To be a good salesman, one must possess or achieve a philosophic attitude," said one, recently. "No one wants to buy what you have to sell. Or, in any case, he thinks he doesn't want to.

"If you're handling an article which people *do* want to buy, you'll get mighty little money for selling it. It's an economic axiom that the more difficult an article is to sell, the higher the salesman's remuneration. The reason that the clerks behind the counters earn but a few dollars a week is because they are selling commodities which demand but little effort. Only the other day I fell into conversation with a book salesman. He sells sets of various classics to business men.

"'A few years ago,' he remarked, 'I was a clerk in a book-store. I earned sixteen dollars a week. To-day I average eighty dollars weekly. I sell the same commodity as previously, but I sell it under more difficult conditions.'

"In ninety-nine cases out of one hundred a salesman meets with a decided rebuff, sometimes courteous, more often not. This is where the canvasser's philosophy comes in. If he accepted the turndown as a personal affront, he wouldn't get far. It's up to him to smile pleasantly and spar for an opening. What is the average prospect's reaction to this attitude of courteous persistence? If he has been peremptory he regrets his rudeness; if he has merely been firm, the salesman's personality begins to appeal. In either case, the prospect is likely to reflect:

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

“‘Well I owe the man a hearing. I’ll let him talk for a minute or two, then bow him out.’

“The salesman slips into a chair. The first barrier is carried.

“Few men will buy your product merely because they like you. Courtesy has served its purpose in securing the interview. Now comes the real task. You must create a desire for the article. Exposition, argument, demonstration, and suggestion—all these must contribute to that final goal, the name on the dotted line.

“You must convince yourself that it is to the prospect’s interest to purchase, then imbue him with the same viewpoint. Watch for leads in the prospect’s own conversation. There is some reason or group of reasons sufficiently potent to induce him to exchange real money for the article you’re selling. It’s your business to unearth them. You can bring forward every argument that has ever occurred to you. Then, often, the sale is made because of a motive which you never suspected.

“One day last spring I dropped into a local insurance man’s office. I was selling sets of books. I talked to that man for fifteen minutes without apparently making any impression. I was about to give up in despair. Suddenly he said:

“‘What’s your lowest price—all cash—right now on the spot?’

“I named it and he wrote out a check. I was staggered. A salesman develops the faculty of *feeling* his prospect’s attitude, and I had felt that the man was hopeless. He didn’t want the books to read; he had none of the collector’s instinct; he didn’t want them as interior decorations. But suddenly the sale was made.

“It wasn’t until I was leaving the office that the motive for the purchase was exposed. It had suddenly occurred

JUST SELLING

to him that the books would make a good graduation present for his son in high school. Now who would ever have thought of that as an argument? Next spring I'll keep that in mind. Perhaps I can make other sales by appealing to that motive.

"Selling is not easy. It's a man-sized job. It demands self-control, resourcefulness, a great deal of sheer physical vitality, will power, and force. On the other hand, it means a good living and complete independence. Good times or bad, an able outside salesman can always be sure of a job. He's his own master and, barring accidents, is as independent of the exigencies of existence as Rockefeller."

Discretion, a Valuable Asset in Salesmanship

"Discretion is one requisite of a good salesman," said a successful one. "As in the cases of a doctor or a lawyer, certain information should be kept under your hat. Your prospects are always interested to hear about the other man's business, particularly that of a competitor. But after you've gone the thought arises, 'I wonder if he won't tell the next man all that he's learned about *my* business.'"

"It was as a young man that I received my lesson along these lines. I was working as a solicitor for an advertising agency which conducted the publicity campaigns of local merchants. One day I called on the proprietor of a local clothing-store.

"He received me courteously and betrayed interest when I informed him that we handled the account of another clothier, Richards, located at the other end of the city.

"'What is the ratio between Richards' annual advertising expenditure and his gross volume of sales?' he inquired.

"'Frankly, Mr. Beckett, I'm not justified in saying,' I replied. 'That's Mr. Richards' secret.'"

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

“‘What medium has brought him the best results?’ was the next question. I told him.

“‘How many suits did Richards sell on his last sale advertised Friday?’ he inquired.

“‘Another question which I’m not at liberty to answer,’ I replied.

“For perhaps fifteen minutes he quizzed me closely. To most of his questions I refused an answer.

“‘You’re mighty close-mouthed about your clients’ affairs, aren’t you?’ was his sarcastic conclusion.

“Then, with a sudden smile:

“‘Which is just why I shall turn my advertising over to your concern. I’ve tested you pretty thoroughly during the past half-hour. I guess my business and trade secrets are safe in your hands.’”

“Learn One New Thing about Business Every Day”

“It is a fortunate provision of nature,” remarked a prominent employer of labor, in a recent speech delivered to an audience of young men, “that there is hardly a subject, however dull and distasteful it may appear at first glance, in which a genuine and active interest may not be acquired.

“I think it was Blackstone, the eminent jurist, who was forced to study law much against his natural inclination. For some years he pursued his profession in a perfunctory fashion, but finally became really interested and, as every one knows, rose to a position of great eminence.

“Now I think I’m safe in asserting that there is not a man in the country who is not interested in the contents of his pay-envelope. In this connection, a statement made by William James, the famous psychologist,

JUST SELLING

is interesting. In the course of a lecture to teachers he said:

“‘Any object not interesting in itself may become interesting through becoming associated with an object in which an interest already exists. The two associated objects grow, as it were, together; the interesting portion sheds its quality over the whole; and thus things not interesting in their own light borrow an interest which becomes as real and as strong as that of any natively interesting thing.’

“If, therefore, you are interested in the contents of your pay-envelope, and if, as most of you will admit, the future contents of that envelope will depend in a large degree upon your knowledge of the business in which you are engaged, obviously it should not be difficult for you to develop an interest in the subject of business. And yet, there are millions of men in this country who have no interest in business. They are clock-watchers; time-servers; mere cogs in the wheel, who *do* just enough and *think* just enough to hold their jobs and let it go at that. Their real interests lie outside the shop, store, or office. Baseball, lodge activities, the prize-ring, ward politics, perhaps—these and a score of other distractions engage the major portion of their attention.

“Why is this? The answer is that a certain effort of will is required to take the first steps in acquiring a genuine interest in your job and its possibilities. To spend an evening in reading a business magazine rather than the sporting-page demands a certain amount of will power. I know because I was the type of young man I’ve been describing. But if you will just try the experiment, you’ll be amazed to note how soon you will actually enjoy the hours spent in acquiring knowledge which some day will pay you big dividends in real money.

HOW TO SELL MORE GOODS

“You’ll note that I’m not saying a word about loyalty to the house and that sort of thing. I’m basing my appeal purely upon the motive of self-interest. The more you know about business, the more you’re worth, and sooner or later you’ll find some concern somewhere that will pay you for the knowledge you possess.

“Read, study, and observe. If you’re a clerk in a store, read up on systems applicable to a retail business; new ideas in labor-saving fixtures; successful retail advertising campaigns; trade-pulling windows; interior trims which have increased sales; the science of salesmanship—in short, study the books dealing with a retailer’s problems and the trade papers devoted to your line.

“Suppose you’re a clerk in an industrial plant. There is no limit to the amount of literature published which has a direct bearing on your potential problems. Scientific management, costs, profit-sharing systems of payment, utilization of waste, stock-keeping. Read about these things. Some day, some one, somewhere will discover that your brain is packed with knowledge that is worth dollars.

“Are you a salesman for a jobber? You’d like to become a sales manager some day. Read about the duties of the job. Learn how the routing of salesmen, according to railroad methods, has increased their efficiency. Read about direct advertising campaigns which have doubled the salesmen’s results; contests for salesmen and how to conduct them; how to handle a sampling campaign. All this and more will fit you for a better job. And the data are readily accessible in books and magazines.

“Do one-half, yes, one-third the actual studying that you did to obtain a high-school diploma and you’ll soon become an authority in your field of endeavor. Learn one new thing every day about your business, and some day you’ll cash in on your knowledge. Follow a regular